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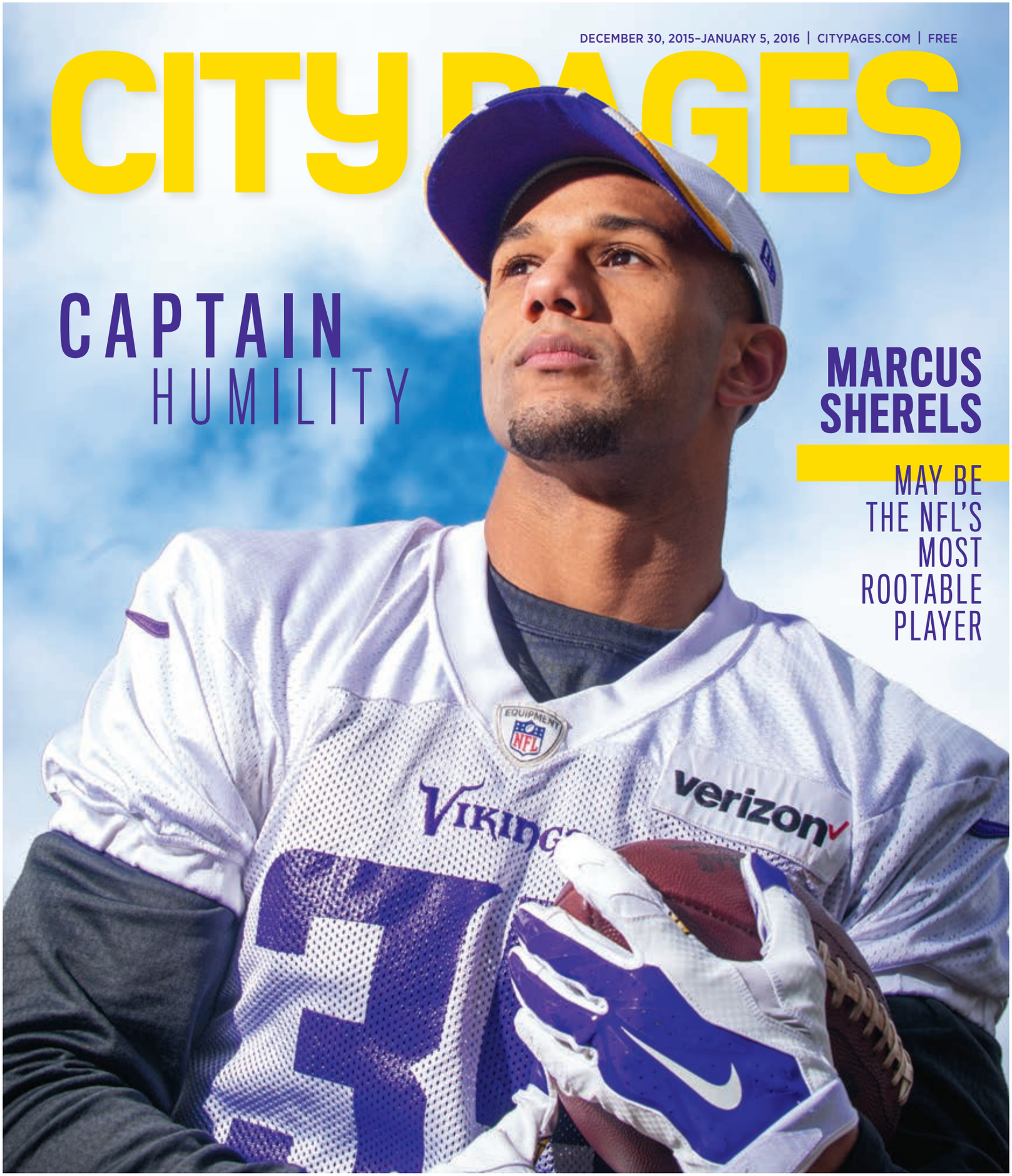

CAPTAIN HUMILITY

MARCUS SHERELS

MAY BE THE NFL'S MOST ROOTABLE PLAYER

MULLEN Hormel's millennial spam campaign *p. 6* | **FOOD** The Carolinas come to Loring Park *p. 19* | **MOVIES** 2016's 10 most anticipated *p. 33*

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Katie

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»19

up front

4 NEWS

THE SHORTLIST | MN GOP wants to slash tax on second homes, cabins

BLOTTER | Staged accidents, a lucrative scheme

MIKE MULLEN | A new SPAM campaign

9 FEATURE

CAPTAIN HUMILITY | Marcus Sherels, the NFL's most rootable player *By Loren Green*

in back

19 FOOD

4 BELLS | Where fried chicken and lavish crustaceans go hand-in-hand *By Mecca Bos*

23 A-LIST

NEW YEAR'S EVE | Drink, dance, or ski your way into 2016.

33 FILM

FABULOUS IS COMING | 10 exceptional movies to see in 2016 *By Michael Nordine*

35 THEATER

THE GREAT WORK | A star composer rediscovers Vienna, himself *By Ed Huyck*

39 MUSIC

KID DAKOTA | Can we do a non-depressing story about the local favorite? Sort of! *By Ryan Warner*

40 | Critics' Picks

41 CLASSIFIEDS

41 SAVAGE LOVE

47 CROSSWORD

»cover credit

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Minnesota Vikings: The faces in the cold crowd
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Total profit-sharing paid out this year by Central Boiler, a maker of outdoor wood furnaces in Roseau County

$5,400

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Twin Cities Amtrak ridership in 2008

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Ridership in 2014, a decline attributed to lower gas prices and chronic delays from rail congestion in North Dakota's oil patch

> "So does anybody remember his girlfriend? The one that was getting her ass beat by Saint Jamar? I guess her life never mattered."

Fatima Rios, in response to "Mall of America wants restraining order against Black Lives Matter protest," at citypages.com.

CONSUMERS

LAST WEEK, a dissatisfied customer returned to Viva Video on University Avenue in St. Paul, claiming a penis pump he'd purchased did not meet the lofty claims it advertised.

The man wanted to exchange the supposedly faulty device, but a clerk refused, asserting that any shortcomings were due to "operator error." So the man pulled the modern version of a penis substitute — a gun — to demand a replacement.

Alas, his second penis did not work any better than his first. He fled without a replacement, and remains flaccid and at large.

FIRST WORLD PROBLEMS

THE MINNESOTA REPUBLICAN PARTY — "The Official Welfare Agency of the Rich Man ™" — is once again trying to put extra money in the pockets of those who need it least. It wants to eliminate an extra tax paid by people with second homes, like cabins.

The GOP is correct in arguing that many are owned by normal people age 60 and older, who bought when lake property was still affordable. But the break would also go to those with McMansions on Lake Minnetonka.

Conspicuously absent from the proposal is any tax relief for people struggling to pay for their first homes.

Scam Inc.

Mark Kulda has a front row seat to Minnesota's most creative fraudsters

Now and then, Mark Kulda will come across a handful of people who say they were all injured in the same car accident. They complain of serious — though undetectable — pain. The kind that takes months of massage therapies costing about $15,000 per person to remedy.

If the accident sounds suspicious, he'll take a look at the car. Chances are he'll find a dent on the front bumper that looks like it could be fixed for $500 — and may have been caused by someone gently crashing into a tree or a light pole.

That would be a relatively primitive way to stage an accident, says Kulda, spokesman for the Insurance Federation of Minnesota. The more complex ploys include unsuspecting victims, planted witnesses, and fleets of cars driven by multiple people who sometimes cut, gouge, or beat themselves prior to the intended crash.

The popular "swoop and squat" involves variations of cutting in front of another driver and slamming on the breaks, he says. In a different setup, one car purposely rakes another in a double turn lane, while an aptly positioned witness fingers the innocent driver. In one scheme commonly found with four-way stop signs, a criminal politely beckons a victim to go first, then charges through to cause a crash.

Then there are the guys who will torch their own vehicles, blaming imaginary arsonists because they don't want to repay their loans. Or those with more insurance on the car than it's worth, who drive it into a lake in order to pocket the difference.

Kulda has seen it all. Staged accidents are a lucrative scheme, he says, because Minnesota is one of only nine states with no-fault auto insurance. Under this model, insurance companies will pay up to $20,000 in medical bills without having to find out who's at fault.

It's bred a crop of criminal organizations whose sole purpose is to stage accidents and file false claims, he says.

Posing as semi-professional chiropractors, massage therapists, acupuncturists, and diagnostic imaging businesses, the criminal organizations set up shop in high-density areas with lots of traffic. They make home visits to folks who have been in minor crashes and convince them to spend an hour filling out paperwork at a clinic in return for $100. These therapists then make up a bogus treatment plan, for which they can bill the insurance company enormous amounts of money.

Last week, the FBI raided a bunch of Minneapolis chiropractic clinics, looking for evidence of insurance fraud. They won't confirm how many businesses are being investigated.

"We've been talking about this type of fraud for a dozen years or more, and [this] raid is the first big raid we've seen," Kulda says. "It's a cesspool. [These businesses] are literally 100 percent fraudulent billing. They do no treatment. These are criminal organizations whose sole purpose is to literally steal money from the auto insurance system in Minnesota because it's easy to do."

Minnesota's auto insurance premiums average $800, growing 9 percent within the past four years. Nationally, rates have risen only 1.5 percent during the same period. —SUSAN DU

Organized crime has made insurance fraud lucrative

TONY WEBSTER

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SPAM Spam

Inside Hormel's email campaign to win back millennials

Mike Mullen

I was finally getting around to cleaning out my inbox when I noticed a series of emails from an unfamiliar sender. I learned the good people of Hormel Foods, headquartered in Austin, Minnesota, spent the better part of 2015 trying to reach me. My stomach, anyway.

Social media is a tough sell on flame-war-weary kids who've seen it all, and retweeted it. It is better, Hormel knows, to be aggressive, persistent, and personal. Welcome to the marketing campaign of the future:

From: Kimberlynn Fischer, Hormel Foods
To: Mike Mullen
Subject: Hammy holidays!
March 7, 2015

Dear Valued Customer,

Hello! My name is Kimberlynn Fischer. I'm the Director of New or Recently Renamed Product Development at Hormel Foods. As you know, Easter is just around the corner. Traditionally, millions of Americans have celebrated the Christian holidays by roasting one of our enormous Hormel hams.

Jesus spoke of people as being "salt of the earth," and then cured Christians of their sins. We at Hormel have, in turn, salted the hell out of our ham and cured it using our patented Cure 81® recipe, modeled on a survey of 1,000 women back in 1963. That's why we make liberal use of potassium lactate and sodium erythorbate, just like the ham you remember from your mother, the stay-at-home chemist.

Whether you're celebrating an immaculate birth or a miraculous return, make this year a memorable one with a Hormel ham.

From: Kimberlynn Fischer, Hormel Foods
To: Mike Mullen
Subject: SPAM is "Cool for the summer"
July 1, 2015

Hey bro,

It's your girl, Kimberlynn, checkin' back in as we roll up on the summer months like they're a hot new club and we're friends in a sweet new hybrid. I didn't hear back last time, so I thought I'd hit ya' up with a more targeted message now that I've learned more about you. (Big ups to Google, Facebook, and Amazon!) Here are four reasons you — a white, barely employed millennial — will be eating Hormel products this summer:

1. Cultural understanding

Mike, people like you are 62 percent more interested in seeming hip to other cultures and 77 percent more afraid of looking racist than the average U.S. consumer. SPAM® is hugely popular in Hawaii, South Korea, and Puerto Rico. Maybe you'd like to colonize those countries with a bruised kale salad? Feel guilty now? Good. Eat up.

2. Irony

Your age bracket will fake interest in all kinds of crap just to be edgy. You drink PBR and hold parties to watch the worst movies ever put to film. Awful stuff is cool! Somehow! And nothing could be worse, and therefore cooler, than our Dinty Moore® beef stew.

3. It's cheap

Millenials entered the economy in the depths of the recession, so you know the tradeoff of quarters for calories. It's when times are tight that our low-cost, high-calorie products really shine. Some even glow in the dark if your power's turned off!

4. Weird diets

A high-protein, high-fat diet leaves eaters feeling fuller — queasy, even — and therefore less likely to snack between meals. Try our Hormel Black Label® bacon, which makes a perfect side dish to our Hormel Always Tender® pork loin.

From: Kimberlynn Fischer, Hormel Foods
To: Mike Mullen
Subject: Go to Horm-hell
November 19, 2015

Hey you dick.

You think you're so much better than me, don't you? I write and I write. You don't reply, and you sure as hell don't change your eating patterns. My boss says people like you are a "lost cause."

Know what I think is a lost cause? America. You think you're too good for food that was stuffed in a can before your mother was born and will still be on shelves long after you're gone. Well you're not.

SPAM got us through the Great Depression. And it got me through a little great depression of my own this last weekend. *Mmmm. SPAM.*

What's that? Have I been drinking at my desk? Maybe, yeah. Maybe a little. But only because I found a nice merlot that pairs perfectly with Hormel Pepperoni Minis.

As for you, Mr. Hipster, might I recommend you choke on some of the Skippy Peanut Butter we recalled last month because it had scraps of metal in it. Think of it as extra-extra-chunky. Jerkface.

I just made myself laugh so hard I started crying. That must be why my mascara is running.

I should've listened to my mom and just married Rick.

Oh, Mike. I just want you to be happy. Please write me back.

From: Kimberlynn Fischer
To: Mike Mullen
Subject: Wall Street Journal: Hormel Gives Strong Outlook as Earnings Beat Estimates
November 24, 2015

Suck it, kid. Turns out no amount of information will turn some people off the food they like. You millennials enjoy your rare ancient grains and eggs you raised in your backyard from chickens that only eat even rarer, even more ancient grains.

You see, Mike, something came to me this morning, sometime in between my third and fourth slices of bacon. Your whole generation really is allergic — to joy. Go ahead, skip SPAM if it hurts your tummy. The only thing that makes me sick is people like you.

mmullen@citypages.com
*Follow Mike on Twitter: @mikemullen_*

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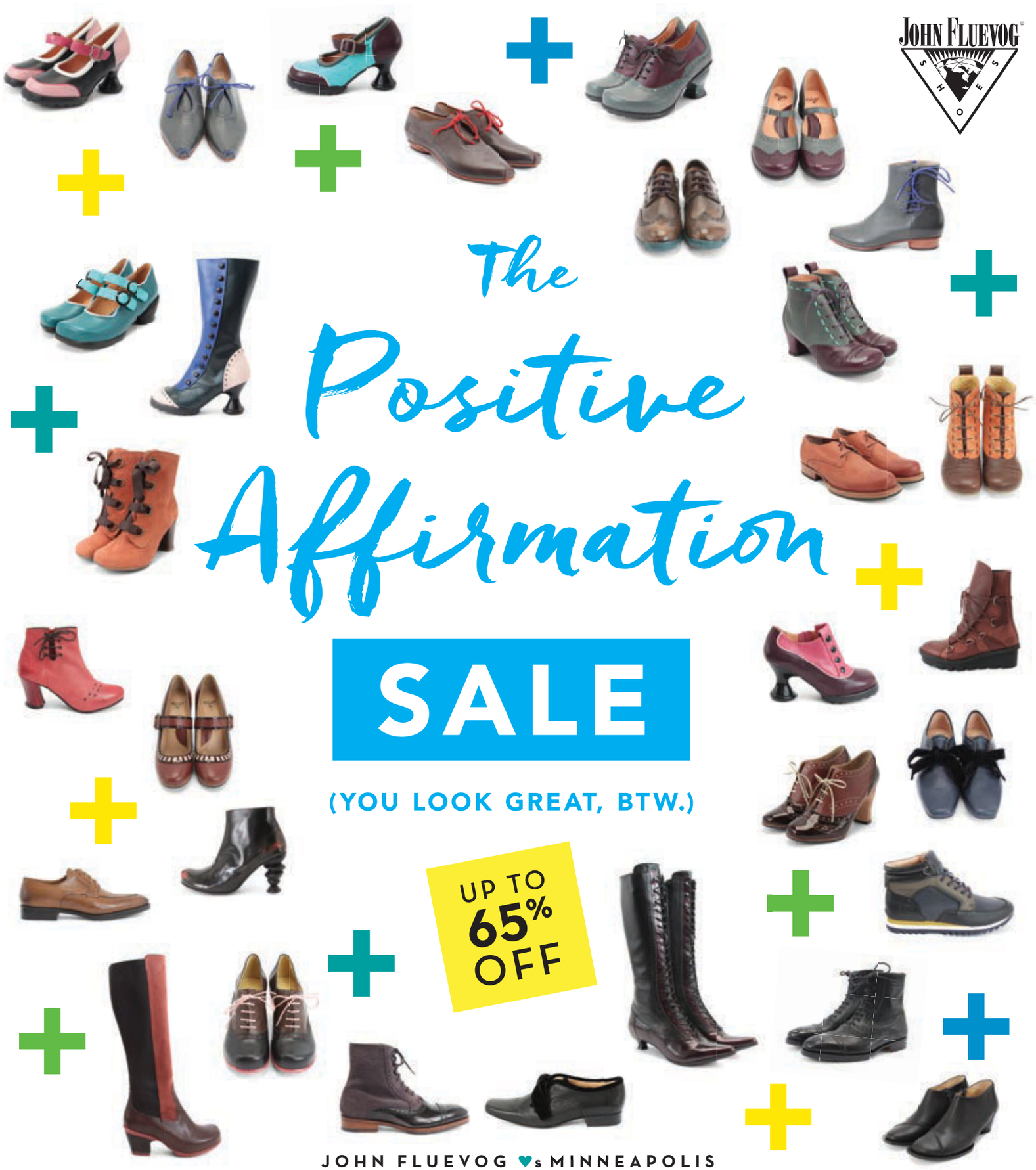
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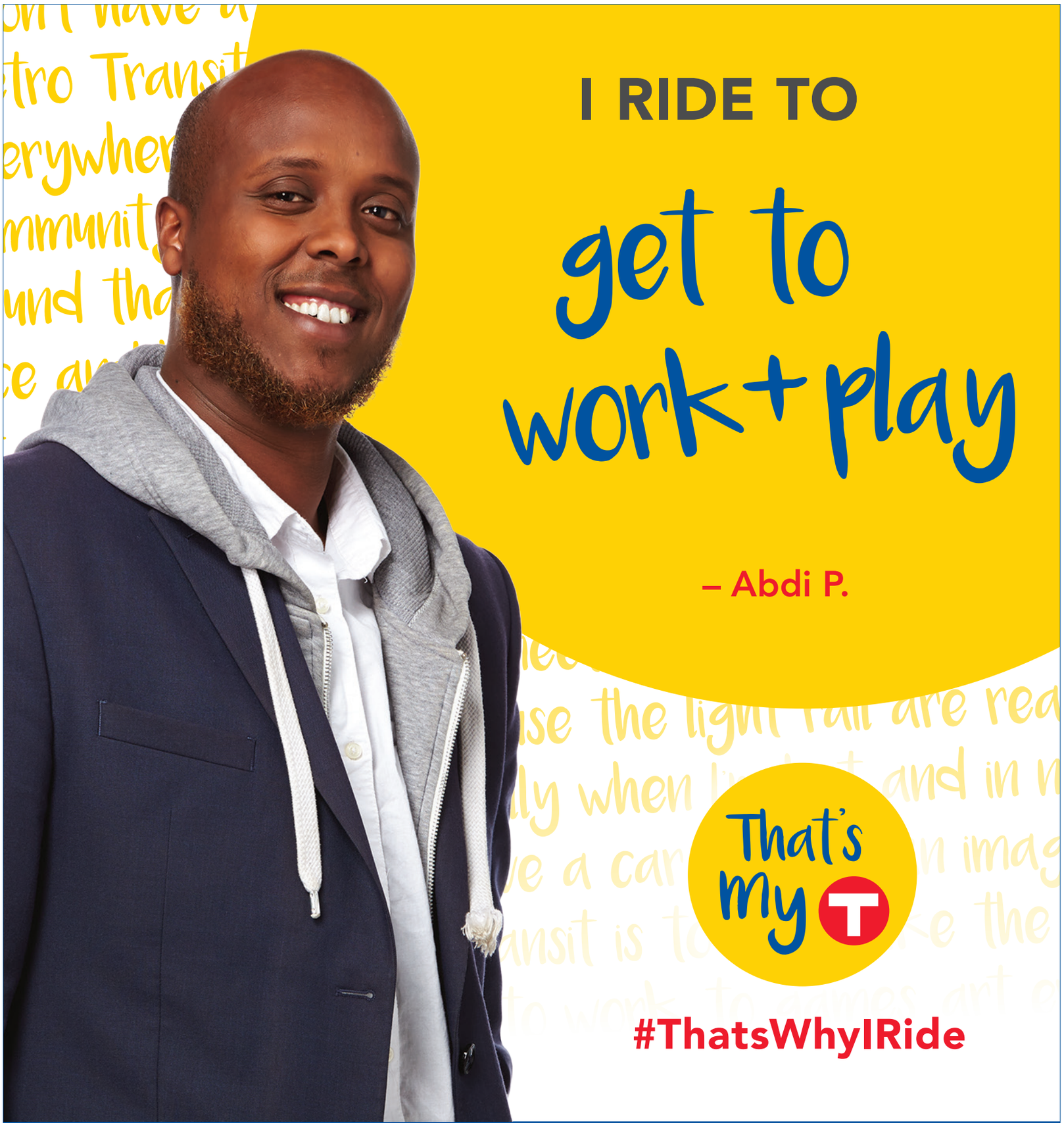
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CAPTAIN HUMILITY

MARCUS SHERELS MAY BE THE NFL'S MOST ROOTABLE PLAYER

BY LOREN GREEN

The average NFL punt hangs in the air for 4.4 seconds. For the Sherels family, that time stands still.

"I close my eyes and I get really nervous," says Kanysha Sherels, sister of Vikings punt returner Marcus Sherels.

She waits it out, gauging the play by the crowd's response, hoping for an ecstatic roar instead of the crunch of pads.

Her brother takes a more clinical approach.

As the ball booms into the autumn sky, Marcus' internal clock starts ticking. With 50,000 people screaming, he can only concentrate on catching it, trusting instinct, preparation, and his teammates to keep him from getting leveled by the 11 hulking men sprinting toward him.

The NFL is known for its larger-than-life figures, measured in both personality and girth. Sherels is neither. He stands at 5-foot-10 and weighs 175 pounds, which makes him the size of an average U.S. male. His personality is equally lacking in distinction. He is soft-spoken and quiet, reserved but intelligent.

Yet in the same way he catches punts — eyes upward and ignoring outside forces — he's been able to dash up Hwy. 52, from the John Marshall Rockets to the Minnesota Vikings. Along the way, this undersized everyman has likely become the NFL's most rootable player.

Photos by ***Bruce Kluckhohn***

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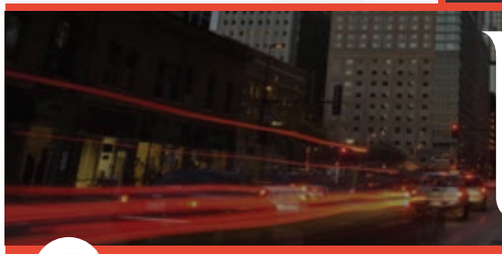

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MARCUS' UPBRINGING in Rochester, Minnesota, provided his first competition. "We were never given anything," says Marcus of himself and his four brothers and sisters. It had to be earned.

Theirs was a full household: Marcus, his older brother Mike, younger sister Kanysha, and two step-siblings. Mother Linda Lager, who works with special needs children in the Rochester schools, "was quick to put us in competitive situations to make sure that we succeeded," says older brother Mike, a linebackers coach at the University of Minnesota. Even making gingerbread houses was a contest to see who could open Christmas presents first.

"It's a family thing," Mike says. "We don't like to lose."

The Sherels boys were constantly going at one another, playing football in the snow and basketball in the street. Marcus was the youngest and smallest. This was his apprenticeship for taking on giants.

He would emerge as an athlete at John Marshall High, playing all over the field: running back, receiver, cornerback, and kick returner. At 5-foot-9 and 150 pounds at the time, he was a pint-sized torpedo who led his team to a Minnesota state title game in 2004, before losing to Minnetonka.

"He had phenomenal speed," says his defensive coordinator, Kevin Kirkeby. "He

He may have led John Marshall to a state title game, but big colleges weren't interested.

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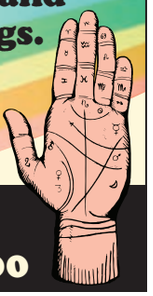

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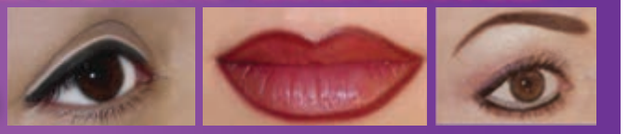

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had great hands, a great knack for the ball both offensively and on defense."

But 150 pounds tends to preclude you from the A-list of big college recruits. By that point, former Gopher star Darrell Thompson was the only John Marshall grad to play in the NFL.

Vic Adamle, a former running backs coach with the Gophers, spent a decade searching the plains of southern Minnesota for players. Thompson was the U's only major signee in that time.

Division II schools came calling. North Dakota, South Dakota, and Augustana offered scholarships, but Marcus turned them down. They were too small, too far from home.

The Gophers wanted Marcus, Adamle stresses, but they weren't willing to bet on his success, urging him to walk on without a scholarship.

To Marcus, this wasn't an insult. It was a challenge.

His brother Mike had already accepted this test, beginning as a walk-on and rising to starting middle linebacker. He would become the only walk-on ever to be named a two-time captain.

Marcus called to ask, straight-up, whether Mike thought he was good enough to play Division I.

"Absolutely," Mike responded.

"I didn't really think about not making the team or giving it up," says Marcus. "That stuff never crossed my mind."

The Sherelses, after all, are resilient people.

MARCUS MADE the team as a wide receiver. He played his first game as a true freshman, a 44-0 blowout against Kent State. But he would rarely see the field again, registering just three catches in his first two years.

He saw time on special teams and practiced with the scout squad. His career as a receiver appeared to be going nowhere.

Shortly before his junior season, Coach Tim Brewster called him to his office to suggest a move to defense. "Whatever's best for the team," Marcus replied.

He was named a starter before the season opener in 2008, just weeks after the switch. Jerry Kill, then the coach of Northern Illinois, was quick to test him.

Marcus recalls the first deep shot Kill took his way. He was covering a taller receiver. "I remember breaking up the pass and that kind of set everything in motion," he says.

He would start 22 games in two years, snatching four interceptions and returning a fumble 88 yards. The Gophers twice reached — and lost — the Insight Bowl.

There was no talk of football after college. Marcus remained a too-small cornerback on an exceedingly average team. Besides, he'd achieved what he wanted: holding his own in Division I football and landing a political science degree. "I didn't even think about the NFL until after the season," he says.

"He's probably had people his whole life telling him that he's not good enough to play in the NFL. He just smiles and says, 'We'll see.'"

He'd been a respectable cornerback, but his stats were average. When an agent called, however, he listened. He wouldn't be drafted, the agent said, but someone might be interested in a tryout.

Marcus was intrigued. He wanted to see how he'd stack up against the best. Law school could wait. He only had one chance at the NFL.

His agent hooked him up with Bill Welle, a trainer who helps with Larry Fitzgerald's professional camps, where some of the NFL's top players train together in the offseason.

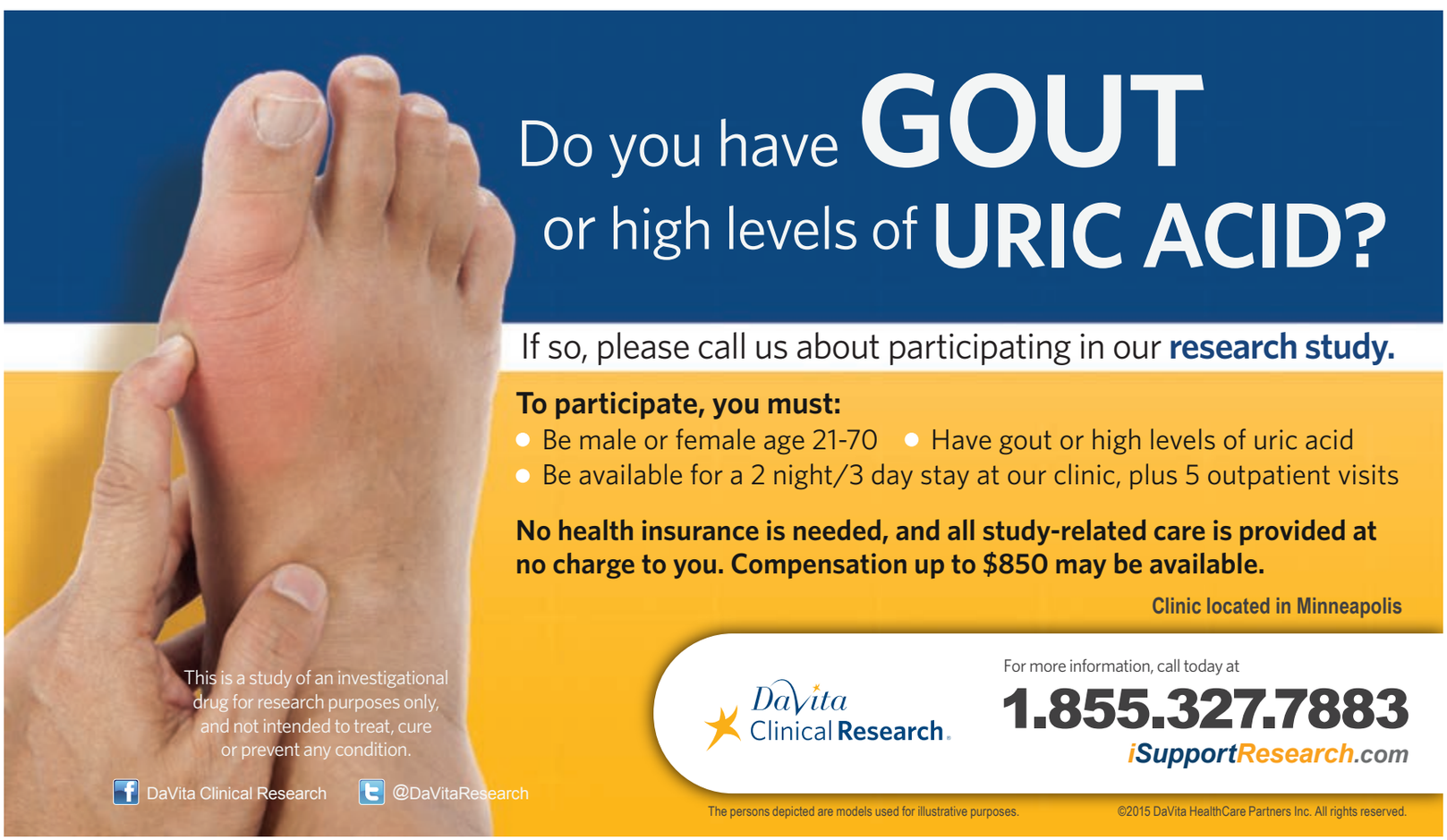
Fitzgerald, a Minneapolis native and All-Pro receiver for the Arizona Cardinals, didn't attend that pre-draft program. It was a session for ambitious players unlikely to be drafted. Welle put Sherels on a workout regimen geared around the NFL Combine: starts, stops, explosion, and sprint times.

"Marcus worked his butt off," brother Mike says. He added 15 pounds of muscle and registered a 4.37 seconds in the 40-yard dash. His 40-inch vertical jump captured attention where his college stats had not.

He wasn't drafted, but the Vikings invited him to a tryout.

"The first day I got one rep during the entire team period," Marcus says. "I was like, 'I don't know why I'm here. I don't have a chance.' Then the next day [Assistant General Manager] George Paton came up and said, 'We're thinking about signing you.' I was shocked."

An undrafted player faces an almost insurmountable wall. For a team to toss



aside a drafted player, it means throwing away his signing bonus and admitting an embarrassing error in judgment. Dumping Marcus would cost the Vikings nothing.

"The team is investing in drafted players and I think they give them more opportunities to succeed," says Eric Decker, a Gopher teammate turned New York Jets receiver.

"Drafted players can be free" in training camp, Marcus says. "They can joke around, whereas with free agent guys like myself or Thielen [another undrafted Minnesota native], there's always pressure to perform. Every day we have to come and play well or the next day we could be gone."

The Vikings liked what they saw in this work-first approach. But his would remain an uphill fight.

Marcus was cut after that 2010 training camp, then signed to the practice squad — where he was cut and signed again, before finally being promoted for the final game of the season.

Marcus was grateful for the experience. It taught him how the pros work, giving him a taste of the NFL that only pushed him harder.

He met with Welle again after the season, this time in Fitzgerald's program alongside pros like Jerry Rice and Cris Carter.

Entering 2011, the Vikings were retooling their special teams unit. Sherels was one of many with another chance. The battle for the punt returner's slot came down to him and 2008 draft pick Jaymar Johnson. Johnson was waived.

He'll never forget the first punt he fielded. "It was a fair catch and I went to both knees right away: Don't drop it!" he laughs. "I caught the ball and after that I was good."

"Some guys play with a chip on their shoulders. With him, it may be there, but you never see it."

By Week 3, he broke off a 53-yarder against Detroit. He also shared kick returning duties with Percy Harvin, playing second fiddle when teams would kick away from his partner. The two combined to set a team record of 26.9 yards per return. Sherels was starting to make his mark.

But he was also becoming pigeonholed, still vulnerable at his listed position of cornerback. Injuries thrust him into the lineup late in the season. Opponents targeted Marcus, throwing over him to veteran receivers who easily broke away from the rookie corner.

He was exposed. Many figured the Vikings would find someone else to backup the position.

Yet he would make the team again the following year, and his returns grew more explosive, including a 77-yarder against Detroit.

Marcus handled every punt that season, gaining confidence with each catch. He also showed improvement on defense, though not excelling beyond his rank.

Six years into his career, he now owns the highest punt return average in Vikings history. He also holds team records for touchdown returns and returns of over 50 yards.

In most jobs, such accomplishments would buy stability. In the NFL, they only purchase a chance to reapply for your job next year.

The key word is "back-up." Sherels tends to be the last man standing on the depth chart — typically fifth or sixth at cornerback. He played just 12 snaps at the position last year.

Teammates commend his technique and instinct, but he's tiny compared to giants like Calvin Johnson, the Lions' 6-foot-5 freak of nature. And that leads opposing teams to target him.

Decker is 6-foot-3. He lined up against Marcus in practice. "Obviously height isn't his big advantage," Decker says. "He is savvy with his speed and quickness and he understands leverage. As a receiver, you want to be physical with him and use your size against him."

Through six years in the NFL, Marcus has never climbed the cornerback chart, which puts him on the roster bubble.

In a league where turnover is rampant, specialized players like him are often the first to go when someone bigger, younger, or cheaper comes along. Every season Marcus finds himself on the bubble, trying to walk-on all over again.

LABOR DAY SUNDAYS are tense for players. Beneath the glimmering excitement of a new season is a locker room's most Darwinian moment: the final roster cut down.

The week before the opener, teams are reduced by nearly one-third. "Over 1,100 players on NFL rosters won't be by this time next Sunday," tweeted Vikes' fan Ted Glover on August 30.

The atmosphere is comparable to an office during layoffs, minus the cubicles.

Each year the rumors cycle: This is the year Marcus won't make it.

"You either get a call or you don't," Marcus says. Nerves flutter as the clock ticks toward the 3 p.m. deadline. If your phone doesn't ring, you can play another game. If it does, you turn in your playbook and hit the road.

Of the Vikings' 2010 rookie class, only Sherels and Everson Griffen remain. Most are out of the league entirely. At 28, Marcus is already middle-aged by NFL standards. The seasons feel longer and it's harder to get out of bed after a rough game. His workouts have shifted from strength training toward speed, acceleration, and agility.

Each year the Vikings draft a new cornerback or returner and the rumors recycle: This is the year Marcus won't make it, the year the hometown kid will be sent packing.

Even starters lose their jobs. The Vikings cut receiver Greg Jennings in the offseason. Former first-round pick Christian Ponder bounced between teams into unemployment this season.

The average NFL career is 3.3 years. These days, the pressure is less severe for Marcus. But it's never gone.

Complacency amounts to a down payment on walking papers. "You have to treat every year like it's your rookie year," the Vikings' senior player, Cullen Loeffler, said during training camp in August. Two weeks later he was cut.

Marcus lives with the same fate hovering above his head. "Every time they draft another cornerback it pushes him a little harder," Kirkeby explains. "He handles stress a heck of a lot better than I would if I was in that situation."

Whenever the blogosphere predicts he's on the cusp, Marcus sticks to the script: Work hard and put your best foot forward. Should the cut eventually come, he knows he'd latch on somewhere.

"You're not only trying out for that team," he says. "You're trying out for every other team in the NFL because every team watches your tape."

When people doubt him, he internalizes that frustration. Of course it pisses him off, his family says, even if he'll never admit it.

When the Vikings drafted potential punt returner Stefon Diggs this spring, Marcus didn't send an angry tweet or demand a trade. He hit the gym.

"As far as being frustrated every year, I think he's happy to have an opportunity to prove himself again," his mother says. "He doesn't just say that, he believes that. The competition drives him to do better."

Outwardly, he shrugs his shoulders. Internally, it fires him up.

"He's probably had people his whole life telling him that he's not good enough to play in the NFL. He just smiles and says, 'We'll see,'" surmises Mike Priefer, the Vikes' special teams coach. "He's motivated by people not believing in him.

"He never feels sorry for himself. He just goes out and does the job that you ask him to do. His humility has come through. That's what helps drive him. He's a very, very good person. Some guys play with a chip on their shoulders. With him, it may be there, but you never see it."

Those who've known him since youth are impressed by his achievements, but not surprised. Deep down, says his old coach Kirkeby, "I think he knows how good he is, but he would never talk about it."

"The thing I really like about Marcus is that he's one of the hardest-working young men that I know," Priefer explains. "He's one of the most humble young men I've ever met in my life."

It can sound like hyperbole when others talk about Marcus: his humility, his kindness, his dedication to self-improvement and other people as a whole. But they're

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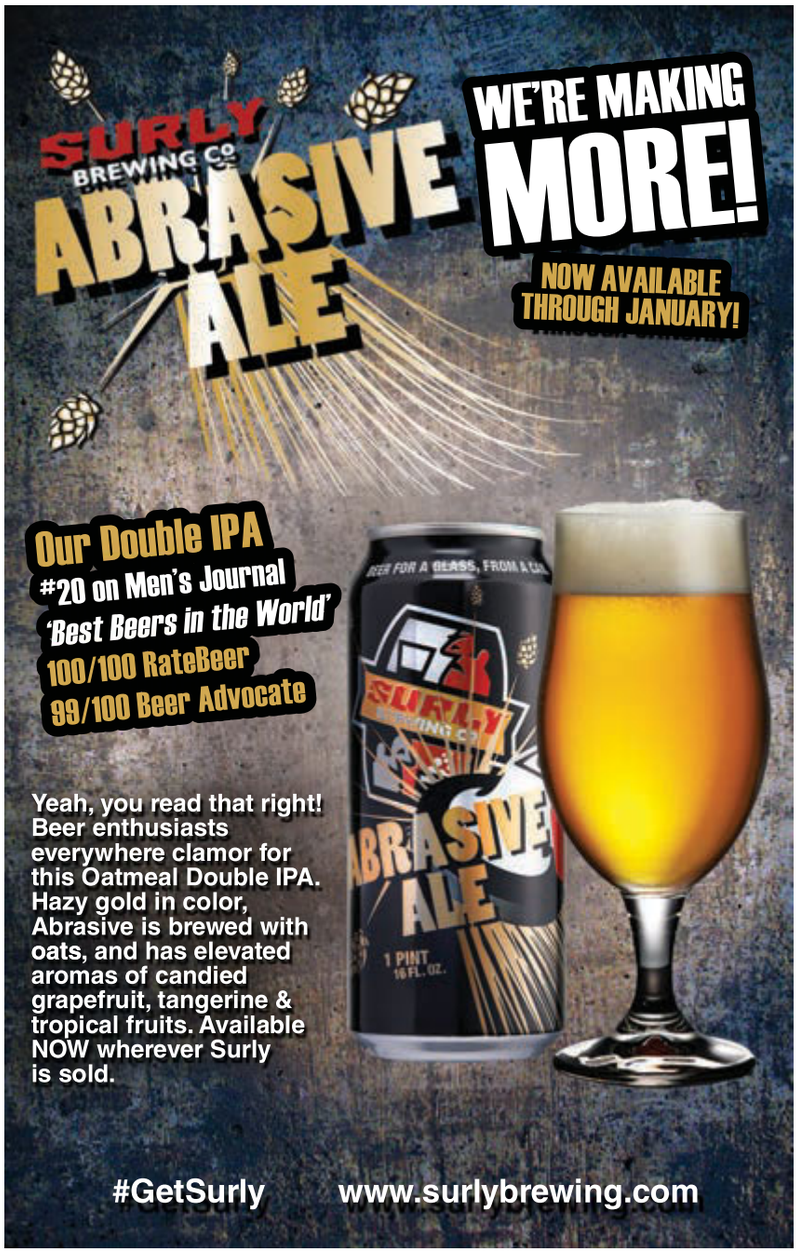

recurrent notes for anyone who knows him.

He "doesn't say much, but his work ethic and his play on the field earn him a lot of respect," says fellow cornerback Jabari Price. "It's understood; it doesn't have to be said."

It's a testament to his character that teammates speak of a bubble player with such admiration. To hear other Vikings tell it, Marcus has gone from the practice squad to consummate pro.

"All he does is do things right," says safety Harrison Smith. "He's the guy that's always going to do his job."

Quite simply: "He's the guy you always want on your team."

MARCUS IS A CELEBRITY in the Mayo city. "I don't get recognized up here too often," he says of his home in Apple Valley. "In Rochester I'll get recognized wherever I go."

In his hometown, he does charity work for autism and improving kids' access to arts and athletics. At John Marshall games, the crowd chants his name.

He moved to his own home just a year ago. "Before that he rented out my basement. Before that we had an apartment," says Mike. "He's got a small townhouse that's very bachelor like, very under-furnished with a ping pong table and video games galore. I don't know that he has plates."

Despite signing a two-year, $2.2 million contract before the 2014 season, Marcus remains a portrait of frugality, says Kanysha. "He doesn't have a smartphone."

Her brother drove Mike's hand-me-down Geo Prism — vintage 1996 — to his first training camp in Mankato.

"The first two days he was parked in between maybe Pat Williams and Bryant McKinnie, and they had big, huge Hummers and Escalades," Mike says. "He came in with a rusty Geo Prism." It didn't take long before Marcus started parking in an adjacent lot and walking to practice instead.

"He doesn't get embarrassed about that stuff," Mike says. "He's comfortable in whatever setting he's in. We don't come from much and he's now lived both sides of it."

At home he's less harnessed. "He's a great uncle, a great brother," Kanysha says. Following a Tuesday afternoon interview, he left for his niece's soccer game on his one day off for the week.

He'll happily talk football, but his replies grow guarded as the questions get more personal.

"The lifestyle fits him to a T," Mike says. "A negative headline you will not read."

Image and off-field antics can affect a roster more than game day performance, proven over countless scandals like the Love Boat fiasco and Adrian Peterson's suspension.

To a general manager, it's just public relations 101, says Mike. "Okay, we've got this guy who's got a DUI and this guy who is a hometown kid who won't do anything wrong. Ten times out of 10 we're going to go with that guy."

Despite the omnipresent vultures overhead, Marcus no longer carries the stress of his first few seasons. "I know what I can do," he says.

It's a modest, convincing confidence. Playing is more fun now. He no longer looks over his shoulder with each minor slip.

His 65-yard touchdown against Chicago this season, followed by a big return to set up the game-winning field goal against St. Louis the next week, speak loud enough so Marcus doesn't have to. With the Vikings making the playoffs, he's a big piece of the roster.

And after six years on the bubble, this winter will invite a new experience. Marcus will enter unrestricted free agency.

For now, he lives in the moment. Whatever his next step, Marcus will prove his worth.

"History serves itself," Mike says. "If he wants something, he'll set his mind to it and get it done."

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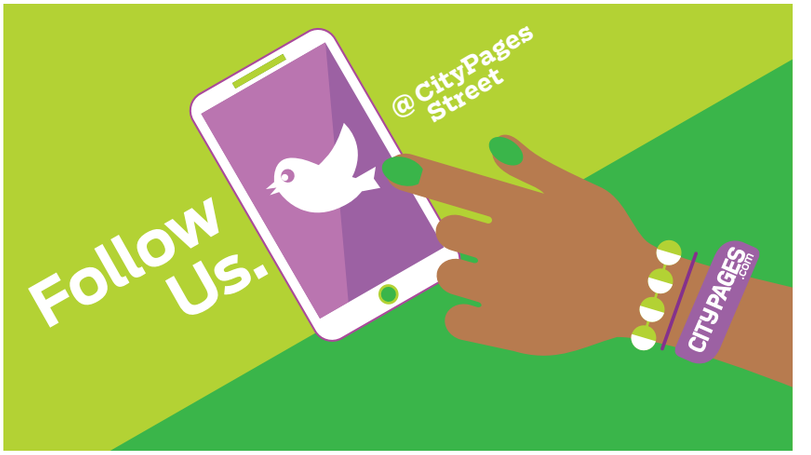

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E. KATIE HOLM

The whole fried snapper, an unusual treat around here

The Latest Loring Park Oddball

4 Bells captivatingly careens from fried chicken to high-end seafood

BY MECCA BOS

The Loring Park complex housing 4 Bells has seen a great many oddballs.

That includes the original Loring Bar, where everyone from anywhere else converged on International Night to dance to accordion music, drink red wine out of short glasses, and not speak English; and Nick and Eddie, raconteur Doug Anderson's part punk rock hang, part hamburger joint, part serious dining room.

Joe's Garage, a sort of dive bar lite, was there for a great many years. It was an anti-hip holdout, a throwback from another time when cocktails weren't crafted and you could order mashed potatoes topped with fish sticks with a straight face.

But anachronisms, no matter how charming, must all face their doomsday. A new oddball is having its day. And like those that came before it, we love it for its quirks.

Unless you, in fact, grew up in the Carolinas, you likely know little of their very specific regional cuisine, except perhaps in little fractals of the imagination that have been culled from the movies. Boiled peanuts, Old Bay, chicory, tasso, okra, and something that makes the rice dirty.

But this hasn't stopped throngs from lining up to give it all a try at 4 Bells.

It's much more than a restaurant that serves regional southern food. The cocktail program features drink makers who execute their craft with precision. The beer and wine selections are expansive yet careful. The room is elegant without feeling smug. There's enough light to be convivial to families, yet it's romantic enough for canoodling.

In short, it manages to be the crossroads it alludes to in the name — the four bells to the four churches that flank it on all sides.

Twin Citians, long deprived of the magical allure of good fried chicken, are about as obsessed with the stuff as they are ramen at the moment — two cravings we had few ways of pacifying for too long. 4 Bells is the wildly popular Revival's closest runner-up for classically great fried chicken.

Though the chicken takes on its own character via broasting in a pressure cooker, the result is a dewy inner flesh enrobed in a fragile, toasty crust. Dill in the brine proffers a racy tang. An inspired move is serving it with three sauces — a competent (if not fantastic) poultry gravy, a watermelon hot sauce, and a Thousand Island-esque "Delta Sauce."

The kitchen also has an expert hand with biscuits. They're not to be missed and offer rationalization for consuming great, creamy crests of nectar-like honey butter.

The place has an imposing way with seafood, rivaled only by the most serious purveyors in our midst — Meritage,

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Satisfy your craving for fried chicken with 4 Bells' take, served with gravy, hot sauce, and "Delta Sauce"

Oceanaire, Smack Shack, and the best steakhouses. If you want it, 4 Bells probably has it: glittering shellfish towers, oysters on the half shell, caviar, lobster tails and claws, peel-and-eat shrimp, all expertly done, fresh as sea spray, presented classically and fastidiously.

We liked the more individualized creations. The snapper ceviche was easily a best bite of the year, with a chile relish that sets fire to the flesh. Creamy yogurt quickly cools things down again. Fresh herb introduces a peppery flavor, and pine nuts complete things with round and buttery dimension.

Try the whole fried snapper, an unusual treat around here. The entire fish is crisped to the texture of potato chips and set upon chile glaze and fermented black beans. It's a bit of an investment at $36 a plate, but it's a delight to set the snapper on the table like a Thanksgiving turkey, and take turns deconstructing it, bit by bit.

Oysters casino with pecorino, bacon, and rapini are as rich and appealing as a fat bank account. Baby octopus with achiote and serrano chiles, citrus, and pumpkin seed is everything you've ever loved about Mexican food in one spirited dish.

The menu is ambitious, with around 40 items. A few inevitably fall through the cracks. Bourbon braised collard greens are a gloppy mess with an unadvertised blue cheese sauce, and completely unappealing when you want an astringent foil to butter and flesh. Scallop hushpuppies could have done without the scallop and the eggy sauce gribiche — the whole of it is too earnest and busy.

But we prefer a place that tries too hard rather than too little. Get a load of all the other ways the restaurant is accessorizing itself. It has a fried chicken walk-up window, allowing one, if one were to have a late-night craving, to procure it from a back alley hole in the wall. It also has a champagne and oyster bar, because grown-up life can be drab. What's a more instantaneous way to make it less so?

The snapper ceviche was easily a best bite of the year, with a chile relish that sets fire to the flesh.

There are also four private dining rooms plus a back alley speakeasy, which is invite only (let us know if you get one). And, finally, the beloved rooftop you came to know and love at Joe's Garage. It's as iconic as Loring Park itself. You're encouraged to bring your dog.

The place is challenging to classify. It's a fried chicken place that also serves lavish crustaceans, skirting up against fine dining while also serving as a neighborhood hang with PBR in the can.

Like anything odd, it's discomfiting at first, yet it ultimately captivates. CP

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Lizz Winstead: Lizz Miserables

The Cedar Cultural Center

Kim Davis. Cecil the Lion. ISIS. Trump. Trump. Trump. It has been quite a year of horrors for humanity, and Lizz Winstead is ready to take one final look at 2015 before we head off into an election year. Subtitled "A Hilarious, Tragic Review of 2015," *Lizz Miserables* finds the comic, writer, and *Daily Show* co-creator (and Twin Cities native) taking a caustic look back at the last 12 months. "I am so panicked about the amount of material," Winstead said earlier this month from her office in New York City. "When I was first doing this show seven years ago, December was quiet. I could build the show throughout the month of December. Now news happens all month long. I am still writing up to the bitter end." You can expect plenty of politics, from the turmoil among the Republican presidential candidates to the ever-present specter of the N.R.A. and guns in America. "I feel like they are some crazy witch, cackling in the background to get us to buy more guns." Other hot topics include reproductive rights, the treatment of refugees, and marriage equality. It won't just be national and international news, however. Winstead has her eye on local weirdness, like trophy-hunting dentists and abusive clergy. She'll be joined by writer and comic Frank Conniff (famous for his years as TV's Frank on *Mystery Science Theater 3000*) and musician Sam Breckenridge. All ages. $40/$50 at the door; $65 VIP. 8 p.m. Wednesday and Thursday. 416 Cedar Ave. S., Minneapolis; 612-338-2674. **Also Thursday** –ED HUYCK

THU/12/31

NYE/PARTY

Decadence: Queer New Year's Eve 2016

Mill City Nights

Sweet Soirée Events, with support from Lavender Magazine, is bringing back its grand New Year's Eve gala to Mill City Nights for an indulgent, sexy, queer party. Sweetpea, one of the masterminds behind Grown & Sexy Pride at First Avenue, teams up with drag duo Butch Dandy to present a nonstop program of local burlesque, drag, aerial, and pole performers. There will be eye candy for all types, as Sweet Soirée is known for creating inclusive environments that are as fun as they are flirty. The night kicks off with Indulgence, a runway show featuring local designers, and is followed by DJ sets from Dandy and DJ Naughty Boyy. A stalwart of the local party scene, Sweet Soirée's Queer New Year's Eve takes care of all the details, allowing revelers to focus on the decadence. 21+. $18/$24 at the door; $102-$122 VIP. 9 p.m. to 2 a.m. 111 N. Fifth St., Minneapolis; 612-333-3422. –CHASE BURNS

NYE/PARTY

Hipshaker/Hot Pants New Year's Eve

Kitty Cat Klub

Since 2002, the folks at Hipshaker have been throwing fab dance parties. This Thursday's happening is extra special, as they'll be teaming up with Hot Pants to ring in 2016. This shindig isn't about aerial acts or open bar or VIP entrances, however. It's all about the tunes and having silly fun on the dance floor. During the evening, DJs Ben Mena, Dan McAllister, George Rodriguez, Greg Waletski, and Brian Engel will be spinning deep tracks featuring searing soul and bass-heavy funk. Wear your dancing shoes, you'll be wearing them out tonight. Arrive early, as this happening tends to sell out. 21+. $10 before 10 p.m.; $20 after. 9 p.m. to 2 a.m. 315 14th Ave. SE, Minneapolis; 612-331-9800. –JESSICA ARMBRUSTER

FAMILY/NYE/THEATER

New Year's Eve Celebrations

Bryant-Lake Bowl Theater

This Thursday, Bryant-Lake Bowl Theater is ringing in 2016 all day with a series of shows, each offering a healthy dash of Scrimshaw humor. *Rockin' New Year's Afternoon!* is ideal for folks with little ones, as Comedy Suitcase's Joshua Scrimshaw and Levi Weinhagen will be teaming up with Adrienne English, Benjamin Domask, Pablo Jones, and Laura Zabel for family-friendly hilarity (with a nice dose of humor for grownups, too). The last two shows of the night, *Scrimshaw & Custer New Year's Eve Comedy Countdown!*, are for adults. This time, Scrimshaw is joining forces with Shanan Custer, Eric Webster, and Josh Carson for lots of improv, skits, and booze as they ring in the New Year. $12-$20. 5 and 7 p.m. for kids; 9 and 11 p.m. for grownups. 810 W. Lake St., Minneapolis; 612-825-3737. –JESSICA ARMBRUSTER

NYE/PARTY

Studio 54: New Year's Eve

Hyatt Regency Hotel

For those looking to inject a little old-school glam into their New Year's Eve, this Studio 54-inspired celebration may be just the thing. The party will feature three separate rooms filled with music from the likes of DJs Strangelove, Dudley D, D MIL, Tink, Big Mama J, Patrick James, and King Otto. It won't all be disco, however, as the playlist boasts Top 40 hits, house, dance, funk, and more. Adding to the wild ambiance will be aerialists pretending to be disco balls, stilt walkers, and folks on rollerskates. Dress to impress,

» CONTINUED ON PAGE 26

7th St entry FIRST AVENUE THE RECORD ROOM

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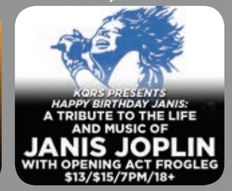
THURSDAY, DECEMBER 31

FRIDAY, JANUARY 8

SATURDAY, JANUARY 9

FRIDAY, JANUARY 15

SATURDAY, JANUARY 16



SUNDAY, JANUARY 17

FRIDAY, JANUARY 22

SATURDAY, JANUARY 23

TUESDAY, JANUARY 26

FRIDAY, JANUARY 29

SATURDAY, JANUARY 30

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 4

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 5

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 6

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 11

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 13

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 20

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 24

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 25

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 26 & SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 27

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 28

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 29

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 9

THURSDAY, MARCH 10

SATURDAY, MARCH 12

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FIRST AVENUE & 7th St entry

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- **3/18** THE PINES *"Above The Prairie" Release w/* PHIL COOK *and Special Guests 18+*
- **4/03** MUTEMATH *18+*
- **4/09** GALACTIC *w/* BOMBINO *18+*
- **4/10** ANI DIFRANCO *w/* CHASTITY BROWN *presented by The Cedar 18+*
- **4/19** ANDREW BIRD *18+*
- **4/24** *Savage Imperial Death March Tour featuring* NAPALM DEATH, MELVINS, MELT BANANA *18+*
- **4/27** COURTNEY BARNETT - ***SECOND SHOW ADDED*** *18+*

7TH ST ENTRY

- **12/31** NEW YEAR'S EVE *w/* KILL THE VULTURES, THE CLOAK OX, GREG GREASE, CHERRY COLA *18+*
- **1/01** HOPE COUNTRY *and* MISCH *w/* ALMIGHTY AMERICAN *18+*
- **1/02** TABAH *w/* GENERAL B AND THE WIZ, WILLIAM WITHIN *18+*
- **1/03** WAVE CHAPELLE *w/* FINDING NOVYON, LUCIEN PARKER, SATORI *18+*
- **1/05** MEINONG'S JUNGLE ALBUM RELEASE SHOW *w/* MUMUKSHU, PSYDELL, EASYJACK *18+*
- **1/06** MARY BUE *and* LAURA NICHOLSON *w/* STACY K *18+*
- **1/07** THE SOCIAL ANIMALS *w/* SAVANNAH SMITH *18+*
- **1/08** THE CRASH BANDITS *LIGHTEN UP* CASSETTE RELEASE PARTY *w/* CHARLIE SIREN, GLOW MECHANICS, AND MORE *18+*
- **1/09** FURY THINGS, THE SOCIAL DISASTER (ALBUM RELEASE), PHANTOM TAILS *18+*
- **1/11** SHOW ME THE BODY *w/* BLOOD COOKIE *18+*
- **1/14** THE MISSING LETTERS *and* KICK *w/* HOLY WHITE HOUNDS, BENJAMIN RAYE *18+*
- **1/15** TEENAGE MOODS RELEASE SHOW *w/* BRILLIANT BEAST, CONSTANT INSULT, DAISY CHAINS *18+*
- **1/16** DUSTIN THOMAS *18+*
- **1/17** BOOFSQUAD & FRANKIE BASH *w/* ELI THE PROPHET AND MORE *18+*
- **1/20** MIC Q.A & SIEED BROWN "A FAMILY FUNCTION" *18+*
- **1/21** NAZEEM X SPENCER JOLES *and* GUANTE *w/* ANDRE MARIETTE, DIS-PLAY, PSEUDOUBT, MIKE THE MARTYR *18+*
- **1/22** CITY OF SOUND VINYL RELEASE PARTY *w/* HOT DATE, PORNO WOLVES, MANIC PLANET *18+*
- **1/23** LOWER DENS *18+*

For show announcements, updates, set times, giveaways, and more:

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UPCOMING SHOWS AT OTHER VENUES

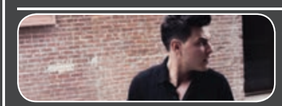
THURSDAY, DECEMBER 31
First Avenue, Greenroom Magazine, and City Pages present New Year's Eve with
TICKLE TORTURE *and special guests* ERIC MAYSON, PERFUME MONSTER, SUZIE
w/ DJ'S TIIIIIIIIIP, ANDTHATSBREON
at the FINE LINE

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 31
PROF
w/ HAPHDUZN, BABY SHEL, DJ FUNDO
at the RED CARPET (ST. CLOUD)
$20/9PM/21+

FRIDAY, JANUARY 15
HARI KONDABOLU
at the WOMAN'S CLUB
$15/$18/7PM/ALL AGES

MONDAY, JANUARY 18
89.3 The Current presents
BULLY
w/ FAKE LIMBS
at the FINE LINE
$15/7PM/18+

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 27
JOSH RITTER & THE ROYAL CITY BAND
w/ ELEPHANT REVIVAL
at the PANTAGES THEATRE
$35-$45/7PM/ALL AGES



SATURDAY, JANUARY 30
TOR MILLER
at BRYANT LAKE BOWL
$12/9:30PM/18+

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 5
89.3 The Current and KUMD present
HIPPO CAMPUS
at CLYDE IRON WORKS (DULUTH)
$12/6:30PM/ALL AGES

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 6
CASPIAN
w/ O'BROTHER
at the TRIPLE ROCK
$15/8PM/18+

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 22
First Avenue, JAM, Northrop, and 89.3 The Current present
JASON ISBELL
w/ SHOVELS & ROPE
at NORTHROP
$40/6:30PM/ALL AGES

SATURDAY, MARCH 12
First Avenue and 89.3 The Current present An Evening With
CLOUD CULT
at the STATE THEATRE
$30-$35/7PM/ALL AGES

- **3/17** STICK FIGURE "SET IN STONE TOUR" *w/* FORTUNATE YOUTH *at the Triple Rock*
- **3/19** AN EVENING WITH GREG DULLI *w/* SPECIAL GUEST DERRICK BROWN *at the Cedar*
- **3/30** THAO & THE GET DOWN STAY DOWN *w/* SAINTSENECA *at the Fine Line*
- **4/07** RA RA RIOT *at the Triple Rock*
- **4/24** JEN KIRKMAN "I KNOW WHAT I'M DOING AND OTHER LIES....." *at the Cedar*
- **5/07** LITTLE GREEN CARS *at the Cedar*
- **5/13** NADA SURF *at the Fine Line*

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12/31 FRANKIE LEE & FRIENDS MAGICAL NEW YEAR'S EVE CELEBRATION w/ MCNASTY BRASS BAND, BBGUN, ALPHA CONSUMER 8PM
1/01 NEW YEAR'S DAY BRUNCH 10AM - 3PM (NO COVER/ALL AGES)
1/02 TUNES 'N TOONS BRUNCH w/ BARELY BROTHERS 10AM - 3PM (NO COVER/ALL AGES)
1/02 AN EVENING OF TRIBUTES 3 FT. LITTLE MAN (JANE'S ADDICTION), ELVIS COOPER (ALICE COOPER MASH-UP), TROMPE LE MONDE (PIXIES), FRIZZLE FRY (PRIMUS) 8PM
1/03 JAZZ BRUNCH w/ MIDWESTERN STANDARD TIME FT. JAMES BUCKLEY, MIKE LEWIS, JT BATES 10AM - 3PM (NO COVER/ALL AGES)
1/03 CHARLIE PARR w/ MATT SOWELL 7PM
1/07 BLOODNSTUFF, TYTE JEFF, WHAT TYRANTS, PANTHER RAY 7PM
1/08 AL CHURCH w/ TINY DEATHS, THE THREE TRES PROBLEMOS (DJ SETS BY JEREMY YLVISAKER, MIKE LEWIS, AND MARTY DOSH) 7:30PM
1/09 THE ANNUAL BLOWOUT w/ THE BLIND SHAKE, BIRTHDAY SUITS, RIPPER 8PM
1/10 OUTLAW BRUNCH w/ THE FEDERALES 10AM - 3PM (NO COVER/ALL AGES)
1/10 CHARLIE PARR w/ AMANDA STANDALONE 7PM
1/12 VENOM INC. w/ NECROPHAGIA 7:30PM
1/14 JERMAINE FOWLER "GIVE 'EM HELL TOUR" 7PM
1/15 SAM CASSIDY VIDEO RELEASE w/ SAM CASSIDY AND ACTUAL WOLF 8PM
1/16 FILTHY ANIMALS, PANTHER RAY, CLEMENTINE 8PM
1/17 JAZZ BRUNCH w/ JAMES BUCKLEY TRIO FT. JAMES BUCKLEY, BRYAN NICHOLS, JT BATES 10AM - 3PM (NO COVER/ALL AGES)
1/17 CHARLIE PARR w/ MATT ARTHUR AND THE BRATLANDERS 7PM
1/22 SOLID GOLD w/ SUZIE, UMAMI 8PM
1/23 20 DOLLAR LOVE 20TH ANNIVERSARY SPECIAL! w/ DUMPSTER JUICE AND MORE 7:30PM
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COURTESY AFTON ALPS

Continued From Thursday
» FROM PAGE 23

2015 goes downhill from here

whether you go retro or prefer simple and polished cocktail attire. For tickets and more info, visit nyempls.com. $50; $90 VIP; all-inclusive drink packages range from $145-$165. 9 p.m. to 2 a.m.; 8 p.m. admission VIP. 1300 Nicollet Mall, Minneapolis; 612-370-1234. –JESSICA ARMBRUSTER

COMEDY/NYE

Tommy Ryman's New Year's Eve Spectacular

Comedy Corner Underground

There are countless New Year's Eve parties, performances, and extravaganzas happening around town tonight, but there is only one show that promises to be "spectacular." Twin Cities comedy veteran Tommy Ryman will headline the New Year's Eve Spectacular, with two sets, three comedians, and a champagne toast at midnight. Ryman has been a longtime favorite of comedy fans throughout the Midwest, making a name for himself at Acme Comedy Co.'s open mic before finding his way into every major club in town. He was a semi-finalist on *Last Comic Standing* back in 2014, and since then he's headlined all over the country. But it's rare to see Tommy in such an intimate venue, making the New Year's Eve shows even better. Add in comedy loose-cannon Turner Barrowman, who will share the bill with Ryman, and you've got a recipe for an end to 2015 that won't blow. 18+. $20. 8 & 10:30 p.m. 1501 Washington Ave. S., Minneapolis; 612-492-1197. –PATRICK STRAIT

NYE/SPORTS

New Year's Eve Celebration

Afton Alps

While many will be heading out to house parties, fancy restaurants, and the clubs, those aren't your only option this New Year's Eve. Folks who enjoy the great outdoors may want to check out Afton Alps' daylong New Year's Eve celebration. From the early morning into the night, folks will be able to ski or snowboard. Stay out in the snow on the hills and trails until midnight, or head over to the party at Paul's in the Alps chalet, where there will be live music starting up at 8:30 p.m. There will be fireworks at 9 p.m., and a champagne toast at midnight. Free (rental and lift ticket fees apply). 9 a.m. to midnight. 6600 Peller Ave. S., Hastings; 651-436-5245. –JESSICA ARMBRUSTER

COMEDY/NYE

East Coast-Style New Year's Eve

Sisyphus Brewing

New Year's Eve almost never lives up to the hype. The ball drops at midnight, you find yourself with no one to slobber on, and then you fight to get a cab or end up stumbling home. But what if you had a New Year's Eve do-over? The East Coast-Style New Year's Eve Show at Sisyphus provides party-goers with the perfect warm-up for ringing in the New Year, because they'll count down to 2016

DAN NORMAN

Spend your crazy New Year with these guys

at 11 p.m. Central Time (midnight on the East Coast — get it?). Now in its second year, the event features a stacked lineup of comedians, including Maggie Faris, Janna Rae Severson, Drew Janda, Greg Coleman, and David Harris. They'll also have a sketch from the Boy Kisses crew, sweet prizes to give away, and plenty of Sisyphus beer. Whether you're someone who loves to party but also enjoys getting home at a responsible time, or you just can't get enough of the final countdown, there is no other comedy show that will better suit your needs. $28. 7 & 9 p.m. 712 Ontario Ave. W. #100, Minneapolis; 612-444-8674. –PATRICK STRAIT

NYE/THEATER

Happy Crazy New Year V

Bedlam Theatre Lowertown

Haven't got New Year's Eve plans yet? Well, you're in luck, because *Happy Crazy New Year*, a choose-your-own-adventure cabaret/party, is ready to provide you with a delectable night of entertainment and socializing. There will be live music, dancing, spiritual forecasting, and champagne toasts. Co-presented by Dangerous Productions and Bedlam Lowertown, *Happy Crazy New Year* brings folks along in a series of dances, games, and one-on-one adventures with actors (audience members can choose their level of participation). After the play, the event will continue with a masquerade party as revelers ring in the New Year. In all, over 20 artists will be featured throughout the night, including guests from New York, Zimbabwe, and Greece, plus live music from the Brass Messengers and local hip-hop artist Ms. Lakesha. The event will raise funds for the company's upcoming *Happy Frogtown* project, taking place in multiple locations in the St. Paul neighborhood. Tickets and more info can be found at dangerousproductions.org. $16/$20 at the door; $10 kids ($5 discount with a clean blanket donation). 8 p.m. 213 E. Fourth St., St Paul; 651-209-0597. –SHEILA REGAN

NYE/PARTY

Transmission Presents: '80s Prom

The Varsity Theater

New Year's Eve parties can be pricey. Thankfully, Transmission's New Year's Eve installment is a sure thing that won't eat your wallet. During the evening, DJ Jake Rudh will be spinning a wide variety of hits from the '80s, with tacky/fabulous/amazing videos projected on the big screen. There will be tunes from major pop icons (Madonna, Cyndi Lauper, Janet Jackson), classic hip-hop (Run-D.M.C., Salt-N-Pepa, Beastie Boys), bad-ass ladies from the era (Siouxsie & the Banshees, Chaka Khan), movie hits (expect a healthy selection from the John Hughes oeuvre), and a few melancholy dudes (Depeche Mode, the Cure, the Smiths). 21+. $8/$10 at the door. 10 p.m. to 2 a.m. 1308 Fourth St. SE, Minneapolis; 612-604-0222. –JESSICA ARMBRUSTER

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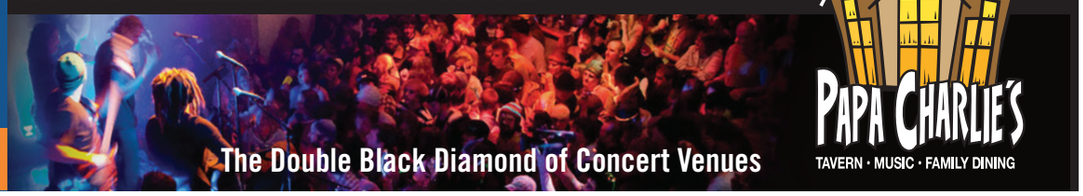
JAN 4 - Dave Simonett & Benson Ramsey
JAN 11 - Barbara Jean
JAN 18 - Mad Ripple Hootenanny
JAN 25 - Gabriel Douglas

WEDNESDAY
SPOTLIGHT NORTH
JAN 6 - Teague Alexy
JAN 13 - Dance Attic
JAN 20 - Rich & Germaine
JAN 27 - Jean-Paul De Roover

UPCOMING EVENTS
JAN 2 - HEIRUSPECS
JAN 16 - SHANE MARTIN BAND
JAN 23 - THE 4ONTHEFLOOR
FEBRUARY 6 - CLOUD CULT
MARCH 4 & 5 - THE BIG WU
MARCH 16-21 - DULUTSEN FEST
APRIL 1 & 2 - DOOMTREE
"SPRING THING" - 2 NIGHTS
APRIL 9 & 10
MOUNTAIN MELTDOWN



Apio performs New Year's Eve and beyond

COURTESY THE ARTIST

FRI/1/1

FILM

The B-Movie Fever Dreams of Seijun Suzuki

Trylon microcinema

It's easy to empathize with the decision made in 1967 by Nikkatsu Corporation (Japan's oldest movie studio) to sever ties with director Seijun Suzuki, though no doubt it was shortsighted from an artistic perspective. Suzuki was one of the studio's most prolific filmmakers (having helmed a staggering 40 films in 12 years), and he demonstrated an irrepressible tendency to transform the most straightforward premises into disorienting cinematic experiments. Finding his radical reworking of pulp material incomprehensible, the studio terminated Suzuki's contract. However, his enduring filmography remains a treasure trove for adventurous moviegoers. Presented at the Trylon microcinema as a monthlong retrospective, the B-Movie Fever Dreams of Seijun Suzuki resurrects a lurid landscape teeming with yakuza gangsters, hired assassins, corrupt cops, hardened prostitutes, and destructive youth, all interconnected in a surreal web of distrust and violence. Rarely screened, the nine films constituting the series include *Tokyo Drifter* (1966), *Carmen from Kawachi* (1966), *Branded to Kill* (1967), *Eight Hours of Fear* (1957), *Youth of the Beast* (1963), *Passport to Darkness* (1959), *Gate of Flesh* (1964), *The Sleeping Beast Within* (1960), and *Fighting Elegy* (1966). Feverishly envisioned, each work transcends genre expectations, suggesting a cinematic artist so far ahead of his time that half a century later audiences are still catching up. $8. Showtimes vary, visit trylon.org/series/138 for a complete schedule. 3258 Minnehaha Ave., Minneapolis; 612-424-5468. **Through January 31** –BRAD RICHASON

SAT/1/2

COMEDY/NYE

Kermet Apio

Acme Comedy Co.

Though he didn't plan it that way, comedian Kermet Apio has become an internationally recognized performer as of late. "It all started in September when I toured Canada for a month," he says. That led to shows in New Zealand and Israel. "They just fell together that way." It's an interesting time to be abroad, what with the inflammatory rhetoric of one of our presidential candidates. "That's one of the things people in other countries want to talk about," Apio laughs, "and Americans don't. Trump gets a lot of play internationally, which is kind of scary in its own way. When he gets brought up, you try and change the subject. 'Oh, that's a nice tree, what is that?' It's weird, man." After performing in these other countries, Apio is trying to figure out how to fold those experiences into his act. "I'm not sure how to do that in a way that sticks to what my voice is," he explains. "Hopefully by the time I get to Minneapolis, I will have some of that in there, because it really was a great experience and is stuff that can be talked about. Most of the time I talk about the details of my life and not these adventures." 18+. $15-$18; $25 New Year's Eve. 8 p.m. Wednesday, Thursday, and Saturday; 10:30 p.m. Thursday and Saturday. 708 N. First St., Minneapolis; 612-338-6393. **Wednesday through Saturday** –P.F. WILSON

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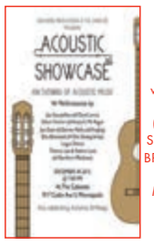

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JAN. 2

16TH ANNUAL

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JAN. 8

11TH ANNUAL

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w/ THE BIG PINK & THE BELFAST COWBOYS *FRIDAY*

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JAN. 15 & 16

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JAN. 30

24TH ANNUAL

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FEB. 5 & 6

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1/14 ..... CRAM EP RELEASE PARTY w/ THE PALMER SQUARES, SPENCER JOLES & NAZEEM, BOOF SQUAD & BEAT SETS BY: PRIME.CUT, PHIB & LOLAMBIE, BLAMSISS

1/22 ..... Maiden Dixie Feat. RACHEL ROBERTS & JAKE NELSON w/ ROADHOUSE 6

1/23 ..... Headband Jam w/ MIKEL WRIGHT & THE WRONGS, HYENTYTE

2/4 ..... Beats.Bass.Cabooze. Feat. SPENCER JOLES AND NAZEEM, JUDAHBOY, LIKEMINDS, AHHHVAHH, NICK JORDAN, 60EAST, TAYLOR RAVE & LIKE MINDS

2/11 ..... Ced Linus and Friends & Birthday Celebration

2/13 ..... 7TH ANNUAL Slippery People TRIBUTE TO THE TALKING HEADS w/ BURBILLIES

2/19 ..... Jacob Martin Band w/ ALANNAH MCCREADY

2/24 ..... Bonerama

2/26 ..... Cannibal Corpse w/ OBITUARY, CRYPTOPSY & ABYSMAL DAWN

2/28 ..... Cradle of Filth: Inquisitional Tourture 2016 w/ BUTCHER BABIES & NE OBLIVISCARIS

3/4 ..... The Lacs

3/6 ..... Everyone Orchestra

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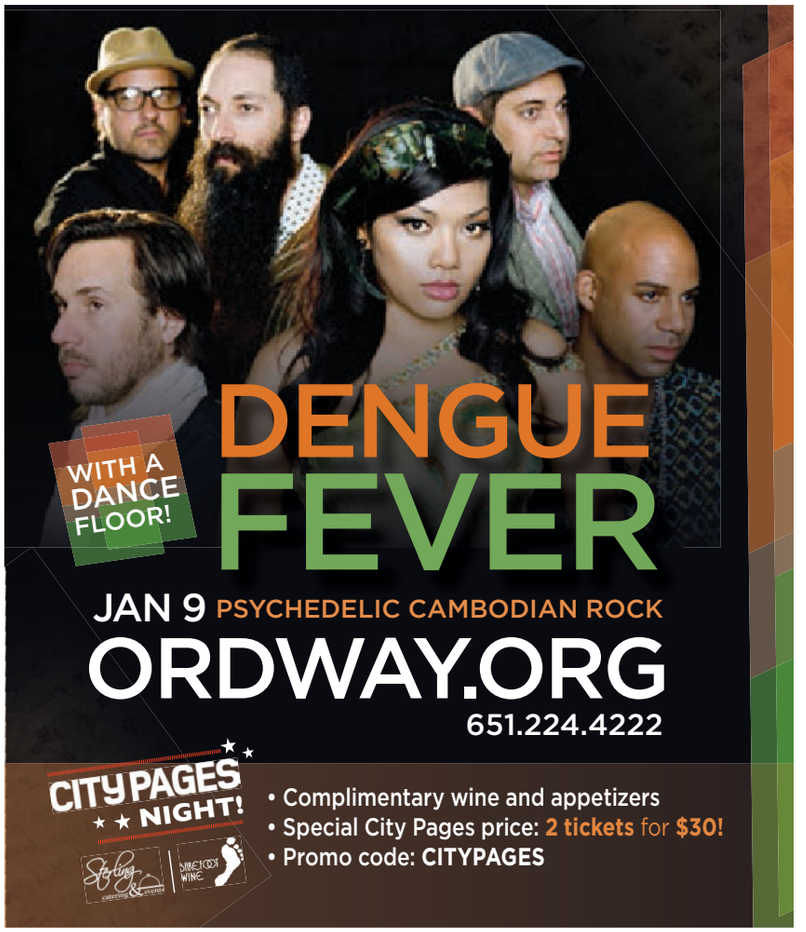

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JOAN MARCUS

SUN/1/3

COMEDY/NYE

Andrew Norelli

Rick Bronson's House of Comedy

Comedian Andrew Norelli headlines clubs and theaters across the country, and he also performs quite a bit for corporate clients. "Those are extra intense," he says of the latter. "You often don't have an opening act. You're often preforming in the middle of some awards and speeches and stuff. All of a sudden here's the comedian, and then they go on with more awards and speeches." Performing for such audiences is a special skill. "Comedy club crowds tend to be a little more fun and playful," he adds. "You can throw out ideas and they'll give you a little more latitude — if they like you." But whether it's performing at a conference center for business professionals or at a comedy club, Norelli feels that most comedy audiences respond to honesty. "There's a misconception that's held over from the old days of comedy, that comedians make things up," he says. "But the prevailing form of modern comedy is to be truthful and to be honest, unless you're a character comic like Larry the Cable Guy and you purposely make stuff up. But even that could come from something honest, because the audience is in on the joke." 18+; 21+ later shows. $13-$22; $26-$46 New Year's Eve (buffet option available). 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, Friday; 7 and 10 p.m. Thursday; 9:45 p.m. Friday; 7 and 9:30 p.m. Saturday; 7 p.m. Sunday. 408 E. Broadway, Mall of America, Bloomington; 952-858-8558. **Wednesday through Sunday** –P.F. WILSON

TUE/1/5

THEATER

A Gentleman's Guide to Love and Murder

State Theatre

Staged with the gleeful buoyancy of a screwball comedy, *A Gentleman's Guide to Love and Murder* follows Monty Navarro, a young man who discovers that, despite his lower-class upbringing, he is a distant heir to the aristocratic D'Ysquith clan. Though he's ninth in the line of inheritance, Monty sets out to secure his ancestral fortune by killing those who come before him. The madcap romp that combines Robert L. Freedman's comically macabre storyline (complete with ludicrously gruesome death scenes) with Steven Lutvak's energetic musical numbers, quickly distinguished itself on Broadway, picking up four Tony Awards, including Best Musical. Directed by Darko Tresnjak, the national touring production features Kevin Massey as the irrepressible killer and John Rapson as each of the eight eccentric D'Ysquith family members. Lending some farcical romance to the show, Kristen Beth Williams plays the reluctant mistress to Monty while Adrienne Eller is the beguiling betrothed. They form a love triangle that Monty navigates with frantic zeal. For all his wicked deeds, Monty's charismatic determination is likely to have audiences grinning with cheerful complicity. $39-$134. 7:30 p.m. Tuesday through Thursday; 8 p.m. Friday and Saturday; 2 p.m. Saturday; 1 and 6:30 p.m. Sunday. 805 Hennepin Ave. S., Minneapolis; 800-982-2787. **Through January 10** –BRAD RICHASON

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RoosevElvis

Jan 7–9
Question icons, gender, bodies, nobodies and somebodies as Elvis and Teddy Roosevelt go on a hallucinatory road trip, from the Badlands to Graceland.

Support for the TEAM provided by Producers' Council members Nor Hall and Roger Hale.

Daniel Fish
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Jan 14 –16
A fresh, funny, and ultimately moving tribute to Wallace, drawn exclusively from his writings and recordings.

Daniel Fish is produced with permission of the David Foster Wallace Literary Trust.

Rabih Mroué
Riding on a Cloud

Jan 21–23
Ruminate on the relationship between memory, fiction, and political reality as Mroué presents a moving performance based on his brother Yasser's personal experiences during the Lebanese civil war.

Support for Rabih Mroué is provided by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

Halory Goerger & Antoine Defoort
Germinal

Jan 28–30
If we had the opportunity to start the world from scratch, how would we do so? Witness as four intrepid individuals on a blank stage gleefully rebuild life as we know it.

Support for Halory Goerger and Antoine Defoort Support provided by Producers' Council members Leni and David Moore, Jr./The David and Leni Moore Family Foundation. Additional support provided by the FACE Foundation through the FACE Contemporary Theater Fund, and the French Embassy in the United States.

Cemetery of Splendour

STRAND RELEASING

Fabulous is Coming

10 exceptional movies that await you in 2016

BY MICHAEL NORDINE

A new year is upon us, and with it the promise of yet more movies. As stuffy prestige pictures expand into wide release and the studios dump their least promising fare into multiplexes, fret not as you look toward the next 12 months of moviegoing: As always, a bevy of exceptional films awaits if you know where to find them.

1) *Cemetery of Splendour*

Apichatpong Weerasethakul rightfully won the Palme d'Or at Cannes for his last feature, the dreamy *Uncle Boonmee Who Can Recall His Past Lives*. The Thai auteur (affectionately known as Joe) makes his return with another intermingling of our world and that of the spirits, this one centered around a widespread ailment whose primary symptom is seemingly benign: sleep. The same is unlikely to befall anyone watching *Cemetery of Splendour* — though tranquil, Weerasethakul's work is so alluringly strange that it's more likely to cause you to sit in rapt attention.

2) *Certain Women*

Michelle Williams collaborates with writer/director Kelly Reichardt in the cerebral filmmaker's latest, which debuts at Sundance in a few short weeks. Little has been revealed about the plot other than a logline describing the intersection of three lives in middle America, but Reichardt and Williams have yet to lead us astray: *Wendy and Lucy* and especially *Meek's Cutoff* are both excellent. Laura Dern and Kristen Stewart are also in the cast. Certain women indeed.

3) *Chevalier*

Along with fellow countryman Yorgos Lanthimos, Athina Rachel Tsangari has helped put contemporary Greek cinema on the map. In her droll follow-up to *Attenberg*, six men on a fishing trip turn their attention away from catching the big one and toward a misbegotten competition to crown "the best in general." They evaluate one another's every action, from IKEA furniture-building ability to seafood recipes to (what else?) penis size, many of them crumbling under a level of scrutiny that this new addition to the Greek Weird Wave withstands like a champ.

4) *Disorder*

Home invasions and war-induced PTSD have rarely been melded into as tense and breathless a film as *Disorder*, Alice Winocour's thriller set on a luxe estate in France. Winocour (who also co-wrote *Mustang*) directs Matthias Schoenaerts and Diane Kruger with a mix of cold precision and understated tenderness that's rare in this genre or any other. Here's a near-guarantee: The first thing you'll do after watching it is listen to Gesaffelstein's mesmeric electronic score, which hums ominously throughout and adds layers of meaning to an unexpected, altogether perfect final shot.

5) *Embrace of the Serpent*

Strange things tend to happen when explorers make their way down uncharted rivers, and so it is in Ciro Guerra's hallucinatory dramatization of two expeditions into the Amazon. The natives are justifiably skeptical of their European guests — this remote area is said to produce yakruna, a mythical plant with curative properties, calling the scientists' motives into question. As with most outsiders, they're quick to exploit this edenic land but slow to understand it.

6) *Knight of Cups*

Terrence Malick, whom you may recognize from such transcendent masterworks as *The Thin Red Line* and *The Tree of Life*, has once again deigned to grace us mere mortals with his elusive directorial presence. The enigmatic filmmaker's latest concerns a disenchanted screenwriter (Christian Bale) navigating the Hollywood dreamscape and all its superficial vagaries. This being a Malick picture, awe-inducing imagery and philosophical voiceover are as much a certainty as polarized reactions. His movies certainly require you to give yourself over to them, but doing so is akin to cinematic enlightenment.

7) *The Lobster*

Speaking of Lanthimos, the Greek writer/director somehow landed an Oscar nomination for Best Foreign-Language Film despite *Dogtooth's* ungodly disturbing content and pitch-black sense of humor. (Not that it wasn't well-deserved. If you haven't already seen that singularly original comedy, drop everything and watch it now.) His English-language debut delivers on its bizarre (even for Lanthimos) premise: Colin Farrell stars as a recently single man who, like all uncoupled folks, must report to a seaside hotel and fall in love within 45 days or be turned into an animal of his choosing. It's every bit as dark and hilarious as that description makes it sound, but also subtly insightful about the nature of romance and coupledom.

8) *Sunset Song*

A new Terence Davies movie is always cause for celebration, doubly so when advance word is as enthusiastic as it is for *Sunset Song*. An adaptation of the novel by Lewis Grassic Gibbon, it tells of a Scottish farm girl coming of age on the eve of World War I. Davies, like Malick, has a deeply poetic sensibility. Whether in *Distant Voices, Still Lives* or *The Deep Blue Sea*, his arresting images glow, practically daring you to look away.

9) *Tale of Tales*

Matteo Garrone (*Gomorrah*, *Reality*), another European filmmaker shooting in English for the first time, delves into the fantastical with a crisscrossing exploration of three fairy tales lifted from Italian folklore. Though uneven, *Tale of Tales* is uniquely ambitious — everything from its unruly structure to its increasingly strange subject matter bears the mark of a director expressing himself as idiosyncratically as he knows how. In addition to the likes of Salma Hayek and John C. Reilly, the ensemble cast features a lovesick ogre, a dog-sized flea, and an imposing, oddly majestic sea serpent as porcelain-white as another famous leviathan.

10) *The Witch*

If we're lucky, we tend to be blessed with one or two genuinely stirring horror movies a year. *The Witch* (subtitle: *A New England Fable*) is unlikely to be bested in 2016. Set at the edge of the woods, where a family of god-fearing Puritans has been banished by their former village elders, this 17th-century chiller understands that less is more when it comes to showing its eponymous conjurer. Witches may be spooky in their supernatural unknowability, but they've got nothing on the kind of small-minded ignorance and fear that still persists centuries later.

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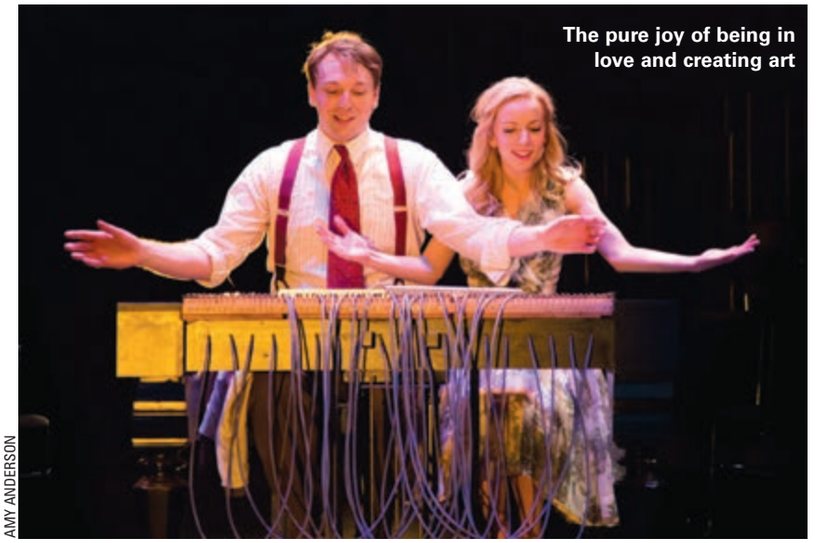
The Great Work

A superstar composer goes home to be reborn

BY ED HUYCK



The pure joy of being in love and creating art

AMY ANDERSON

For the second year, 7th House Theater has premiered a new work for the holiday season. And for the second year, it's a winner that freely mixes love, passion, and heartbreak into a moving, musical ride.

Hans Gartner is a superstar composer and pianist near the end of his life. His mortality comes into focus after he collapses at a Carnegie Hall performance. The near-death experience pushes him to return to his birthplace of Vienna, which he hasn't visited in decades. He's accompanied by his less-than-enthusiastic daughter, Charlotte.

The Great Work splits its time between present-day Hans and the 20-year-old starving artist version of Hans, who is trying to turn his talents into a career in post-war Europe. His big break comes when he gets a tutoring job with the wealthy von Laudon family. While Hans is teaching the piano to the von Laudons' willful daughter Franny, he quickly falls for the older daughter, Elisabeth.

That spark turns into more than love. Elisabeth encourages Hans to compose music, which launches his journey to fame. But somewhere along this path, the latter-day Hans lost his way. The only way to recapture that spark is to return to the von Laudon's castle to perform.

It's best to think of the hourlong play as a short story instead of a full-blown musical. There are no subplots to stretch the action — or distract us from the main plotline.

This simplicity serves the story well, though slower pacing would help to deepen the experience. That's especially true when the younger Hans has to make a key decision: Should he stay in Vienna with Elisabeth, or go on tour as a young pianist? It's a moment that deserves to be held as long as possible, but instead passes in a flash.

While Grant Sorenson's script would benefit from some extra cooking, that's not true of David Darrow's songs. Musical- theater fans will recognize more than a little Stephen Sondheim in the score.

The lyrics offer a strong mix of bittersweet nostalgia and the pure joy of being in love and creating art. Actors David Carey and Andy Frye make a convincing pair, presenting Hans at opposite ends of his life. They have the same twinkle, and their clear, passionate singing grabs the listener from the first notes.

In fact, the vocals are tremendous from the entire eight-member cast. While the show is made up mostly of solos and duets, the occasional chorus fills the room with a sound that makes you positively giddy. That's especially true when the chorus sings Hans' long-lost work. Every note carries the potential of a Viennese spring.

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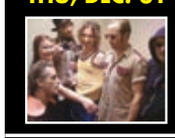
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MELISSA JELATIS

Darren Jackson and Christopher McGuire of Kid Dakota

The Kid's Alright ... ish

Can we accomplish the first non-depressing article about local favorite Kid Dakota? Sort of!

RYAN WARNER

What I'd like to do is write an article about Kid Dakota where the focus is on something other than depression, where the narrative arc of "finding a light in the darkness" is put out to pasture. I'm not particularly interested in the grisly details of Darren Jackson's life, or in finding a resonant truth somewhere in his 15-odd years as Kid Dakota.

I mention this to Jackson over dinner — how this one is going to be different.

"Sure, do whatever. Hopefully it will get people out to the show. Do I write depressing music?" the South Dakota-born indie rocker responds, almost as a rhetorical joke. "I remember someone from City Pages, this was years ago, she was really eager to get into that. Her first questions were like, 'Why are you so depressing? What's your fucking problem?'"

So far, any preconceived notions of the potentially mercurial musician are pleasantly obscured by the warm and candid musician in front of me. Jackson, who will play his first Twin Cities concert in more than a year Wednesday at Turf Club, occasionally launches into his renowned reservoir of sensationally depraved stories, but there's always a punchline. His girlfriend, Jamie, is seated with us at Sen Yai Sen Lek. They seem like they're in love.

I've got this half-baked question about why Kid Dakota's music gets labeled as depressing. What is a sad song, exactly? What recipe of minor chords and platitudes is most effective? I'm fumbling until I mention Adele, the current Kleenex Queen of pop music. Jamie stops me there. "Darren has a theory about Adele," she says. Does he ever.

"She's got a great voice, right? We can't argue with that. Whether she has any truly sad music though, I'm not sure," says Jackson, 44, who left Minnesota years ago to pursue a Ph.D. in philosophy at Virginia Tech. "I'll say this: If you had a mediocre singer doing those songs, let's see how they stand up. Because, with Adele, I'm sorry, but the songs are bullshit. Here's what's wrong with that song 'Hello,' okay? You didn't call him a thousand times. Don't lie about it. You called maybe seven times."

Taking issue with the amount of times Adele called her old flame is preposterous. When dealing with heartache, though, it's key that the narrative feels specific to the listener's own sensations — the things you did or didn't say; what the subject was wearing; the crushing recall of apartment layouts. Jackson posits Elliott Smith — "He's got the facts without pulling any punches" — as a sort of anti-Adele, though his modesty prevents him from using his own music as an example.

Our entrees are cold by the time we get into the reason I'm doing the interview.

Wednesday's Kid Dakota show will be the band's first with the original lineup of Jackson and drummer Christopher McGuire in a long while. To fuel expectations, Kid Dakota, who once played live consistently with a rotating cast of standout local musicians, has rarely performed in recent years, and Jackson hasn't released new music since 2011's *Listen to the Crows as They Take Flight*.

When pushed for details about the group's absence, Jackson's response is dizzying.

But first, the welcome news for Kid Dakota fans: There's a ton of new music. Sessions with Low's Alan Sparhawk were recorded back in 2013. Then, last year, after something of a musical breakthrough, more recordings began at Pachyderm Studio in Cannon Falls, with friend/studio owner John Kuker. More Kid Dakota music and gigs should arrive in the summer when Jackson plans to move back to Minneapolis.

But we're talking about Kid Dakota, a band whose sadness is baked into its DNA. Any hope for a new narrative vanished as Jackson presented the following details: The musical breakthrough of 2014 was the result of a bicycle accident that broke his pelvis. He was effectively bedridden for months; he couldn't even hold a guitar. Once Jackson became healthy, the recording process at Pachyderm was cut short by Kuker's unexpected death in February. The silver lining? Jackson and McGuire were reunited at Kuker's funeral.

"After the destruction is over and you're still alive, there's the matter of just how to live," Jackson says. "That's what I'm trying to figure out."

It's dark stuff, but Jackson isn't marinating in darkness. When dinner is over, we go to the place where he's staying, and he plays Christmas standards on the guitar. We sing along.

I reach McGuire by phone on Christmas Day for his take on the upcoming reunion. He's preparing for a casino gig with another group in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. "We're doing like holiday jazz standards for the blue-haired," he reports, struggling to remember the city or the name of the casino.

McGuire has spent large portions of his life on the road. He's toured all over the world with the Mountain Goats and John Vanderslice, in addition to drumming locally in bands like 12 Rods and Kid Dakota. Recently, he's been working on his own music in a project called Model Hawk that'll be preparing a release in 2016.

I explain the hope for this article to McGuire: A Kid Dakota story that's free of sadness. It doesn't register as I hoped it would.

"I hope I'm not saying too much, but then, I guess I don't care if I do embarrass him," he responds. "Not that this is particularly embarrassing because it's part of everybody, but Darren does get dark. You saw a great side of him, which isn't to say there's a bad side to him — he just gets dark. That's still with him. He's a depressed, dark dude. But things change. More of his music is hopeful now."

I mention that this would be a good time for hopeful Kid Dakota music, with the world being such a horrifying place nowadays. McGuire alleviates my concerns about doing another sad Kid Dakota piece, while doing a fine job promoting his show in the process:

"Well, and I really mean this, even if we can't be hopeful and the Earth is doomed, if you're going to come to the Turf Club, you should forget about your troubles for a while. You should go into this trance with Darren and I, hear some stories, and then, when the lights come up, the air will be a little sweeter."

KID DAKOTA
will play at the Turf Club on Wednesday, Dec. 30.

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Tickle Torture

FINE LINE, THURSDAY 12.31

Based on his stage persona, you'd think Elliott Kozel spends most of his time making music at earth-shattering orgies. Since he went solo as Tickle Torture, Kozel, who has performed with a number of Twin Cities indie-rock bands, has developed a titillating spectacle of a live show. Typically wearing very little more than sequin-studded marble-bag underwear, a jeweled veil, gold body paint, and a headdress, Tickle Torture backs it all up with buff and gorgeous, nearly naked male and female dancers and topless bandmates. Amid revved-up electro-funk and hyper-sexual lyrics, Kozel and crew deliver a deliciously erotic, sex-positive performance that'd make early Prince blush. It's already the stuff of local legend. Kozel, who's known to hand out condoms with free music downloads on them, has released three records as Tickle Torture, most recently last year's *Spectrophilia* EP. Kozel, who recently relocated to L.A., tells City Pages he has "a lot of weird plans in the works" for his New Year's Eve homecoming show, which will also feature Eric Mayson, Perfume Monster, Suzie, and DJ Tiiiiiiiiiip. *18+. $20-$50. 9 p.m. 318 First Ave. N. Minneapolis; 612-338-8100.* –DANNY SIGELMAN

Tickle Torture
SWIM AGENCY

Kill the Vultures

7TH STREET ENTRY, THURSDAY 12.31

With its twisted blend of beats, surreal poeticism, boisterous rap vocals, and abstracted acoustic instruments, Kill the Vultures' new release, *Carnelian*, should prove to be the hip-hop duo's most ambitious, bizarre, musical, and brilliant record to date. The 12-track album, the group's fourth, dropped in October via Totally Gross National Product. *Carnelian* explores the dark side of morality with its unpleasant and offbeat yet alluring aesthetics. Prior to Kill the Vultures, emcee Alexei Moon Casselle (Crescent Moon) and producer Stephen Lewis (Anatomy) collaborated in the group Oddjobs, a more customary hip-hop outfit that ultimately did not satisfy their creative needs. So the two began experimenting with more avant garde methods, which proved to be more fulfilling. As Casselle told City Pages in October: "[*Carnelian*] might not make sense to everyone 'cause it can seem abstract and very out there, but I think the world is abstract and out there and weird as fuck." KTV will celebrate New Year's in that world alongside standout locals the Cloak Ox, Greg Grease, and Cherry Cola. *18+. $20. 9 p.m. 701 First Ave. N., Minneapolis; 612-338-8388.* –DIANE MILLER

E.L.nO

LEE'S LIQUOR LOUNGE, THURSDAY 12.31

For far too long we've been told that Electric Light Orchestra were insufferable '70s cheese, a bloated prog-rock monstrosity that valued production technique over real feeling and hovered near the top of the Reasons Punk Needed to Happen list. Truth is, there was a hell of a power-pop band beneath all those electronic strings and concept-record conceits, and even if Jeff Lynne's bid for Beatledom fell a bit short of that lofty goal, the songs that resulted in the interim — "Don't Bring Me Down," "Mr. Blue Sky," "Do Ya," "Evil Woman" — are deservedly iconic. Local cover band E.L.nO — comprised of members of Accident Clearinghouse, Detroit, Billy Johnson's Roadshow, and Manplanet — might not be entirely straight-faced in their tribute, at least if their gigantic white-dude-afro wigs are any indication, but they embrace the utopian giddiness in their homage along with the *Xanadu*-scoring silliness. The band said their annual New Year's Eve party would be put to bed after last year's gig, but they're back for more. *21+. $12. 9 p.m. 101 Glenwood Ave. N. Minneapolis; 612-338-9491.* –NATE PATRIN

The Jayhawks

FIRST AVENUE, SATURDAY 1.2

This performance by the Jayhawks is something of a post-holidays gift to their hometown fans. The Jayhawks — those rootsy, alt-country pioneers influenced by the likes of Gram Parsons, Buffalo Springfield, and the Band — aren't even on tour. The band is currently a quartet, with longtime members Gary Louris, Marc Perlman, Karen Grotberg, and Tim O'Reagan. Still missing is founding member Mark Olson, whose songwriting and unique, arid harmonies with Louris are Jayhawks touchstones. Olson initially left the band in 1995, but returned for 2011's *Mockingbird Time*, only to go back to his solo projects. Also departed (recently, although he worked on the album) is guitarist Kraig Johnson, reportedly busy with the resurgent Run Westy Run. As for new material, this fall the band recorded 17 tracks in Portland, Oregon, with producers Tucker Martine (who's worked with Modest Mouse, My Morning Jacket, and the Decemberists) and Peter Buck of R.E.M. The tunes, the band reports, range from "patented Jayhawks pop perfection to envelope-pushing creativity that will surprise even the most ardent fans." *18+. Sold out. 8:30 p.m. 701 First Ave. N., Minneapolis; 612-338-8388.* –RICK MASON

James Brown Tribute

DAKOTA JAZZ CLUB, SUNDAY & MONDAY 1.3-4

Sonny Knight's youthful music career may have been sidetracked for decades by a truck drivin' job. But the classic soul, R&B, and funk vocalist is more than making up for it these days as he leads the blistering horn and rhythm ensemble, the Lakers. You really couldn't ask for anyone more appropriate to front a tribute to James "Godfather of Soul" Brown than Knight, who in the last couple of years has exploded on the scene after decades of obscurity with a fine studio album and a live one. Knight's soulful pipes and exquisite timing, plus the Lakers' tight, sweaty, take-no-prisoners precision and glorious swagger, should stir up a wicked incarnation of JB. Adding to the genuine vibe will be the presence of Brown associates (and themselves monumental figures): trombonist Fred Wesley and drummer Jabo Starks. Both longtime members of Brown's band, Wesley was also its leader and musical director, while Starks, along with fellow JB percussionist Clyde Stubblefield, is considered the most sampled drummer ever. Guaranteed to make you feel good. *$20-$35 7 & 9 p.m. 1010 Nicollet Mall, Minneapolis; 612-332-5299.* –RICK MASON

Two Doms, One Sub

Plus how to make it out of a Tinder hookup alive

Dan Savage

What are your thoughts on two Doms sharing one sub? The scene I envision includes the domination of the other Dom. Do some Doms enjoy the submission to another Dom while also enjoying dominating the sub? It's probably best to put it into the context of my fantasy. I tie my sub to a chair or tie her down and then send a Snapchat to her other Dom. I invite the other Dom to come over and have his way with her. I would then leave, but they must stop immediately when I return, no matter where they are. The other Dom must then leave, and I do what I want from that point. Is this something I should talk with the other Dom about beforehand or should I just do it and see what happens? I've talked to my sub, and she is really into that scene, but she doesn't know how her other Dom would feel about it.

DOMINATE OTHER MAN

Sharing a sub could strike me as a great/hot idea, DOM, but my feelings are irrelevant — the scene isn't going to work if the other Dom thinks the idea is terrible/lame. That said, I don't see any harm in waiting until your sub is tied down to propose this scene — lay out the details out in advance on Snapchat, not once he's in the room, so he'll be free to take a pass if the scene doesn't appeal to him. But by waiting, you run the risk of discovering, after it's all set up, after you've sent the Snapchat, that her other Dom loves the idea but is out of town/watching the GOP debate/sitting shivah/whatever.

Longtime reader and listener (magnum podcast subscriber!) here, and I have a conundrum. My partner and I have a DADT agreement in regards to extramarital relations. I'm a fortysomething woman who travels a lot on business, and I find those trips a great opportunity to have NSA flings with younger men, all in good fun. So far, Tinder seems to be a good way to meet people, and I try to take precautions to ensure they are who they say they are by checking them out on social media and meeting them first in a public place. But a girl can't be too careful. Sometimes I wish I had someone I could call and just say, "Hey, I'm hosting a stranger tonight at my hotel. Could you call me at a specific time to check he hasn't chopped me up into little pieces?" My partner can't be that person because of the whole DADT thing. My friends don't know about my flings. And the front desk seems inappropriate. Is there an app out there providing this kind of service? Or does someone need to create one?

SEEKS DISCREET CALL SERVICE

A Tinder-like app to hook up random people who are about to hook up with other random people so the randos who met via the Tinder-like app can verify neither was murdered by the randos they met via Tinder itself? Sounds a little complicated, SDCS, and I'm not sure the market for your proposed app is big enough to attract investors. I also don't think introducing a second potentially unreliable and/or sinister stranger into the mix is going to make your hotel hookups appreciably safer.

Here's a better idea/simpler life hack: Schedule a wake-up call for an hour or two after your Tinder rando is due to arrive. You can schedule wake-up calls for any time of day, SDCS, and in nicer hotels you can even ask the front desk to ring you personally instead of scheduling a robocall. Just tell the receptionist you're a heavy sleeper and you need them to verify that you're awake/alive in time for your big meeting.

Or you could take a risk and confide in a friend about your open marriage, your flings, and your need for a safety buddy.

---

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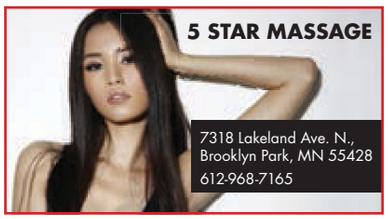

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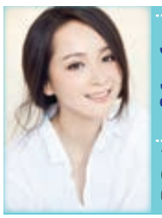

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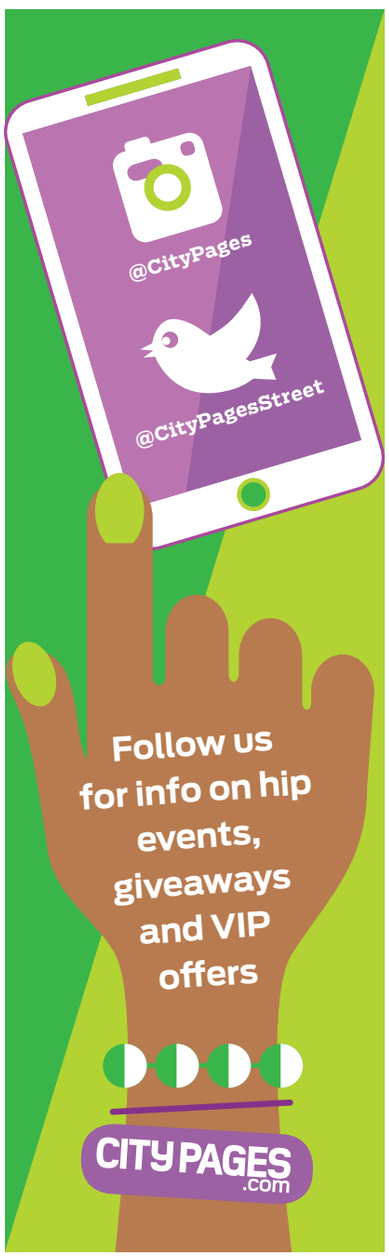

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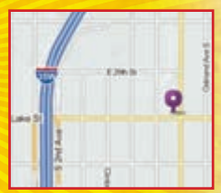

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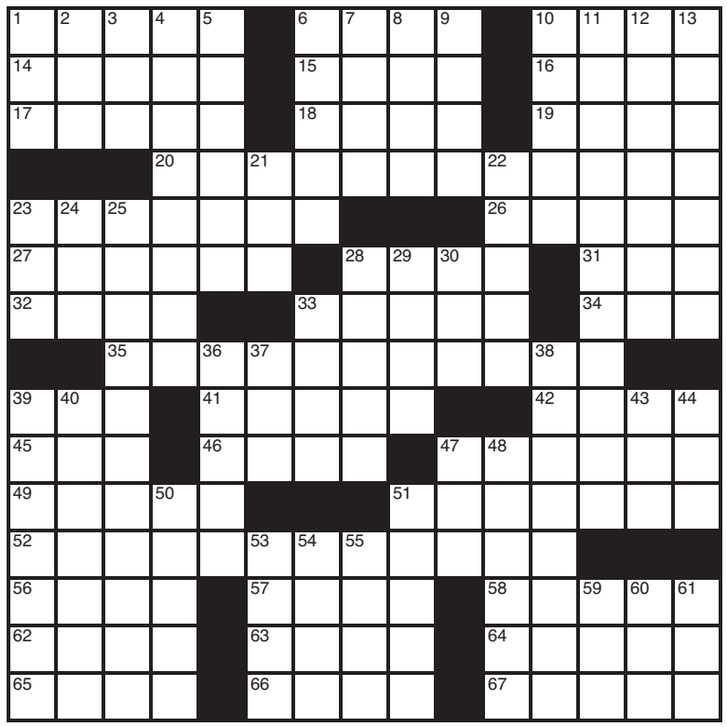

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Across

1 Schoolyard declaration
6 Like red Spanish wine
10 Condo meas.
14 Oakland Athletics executive Billy
15 PokerStars pro Hershiser
16 Surrounding light
17 Dimin.'s opp.
18 Ration (out)
19 Call center heads?
20 Pre-telegraph means of communication
23 Lines up
26 Ito of crosswords and jurisprudence
27 1914 Booth Tarkington novel
28 Work involved in heavy lifting?
31 Closest star
32 It's a wrap on the set
33 Big bone
34 Blog feed format
35 Naive
39 ___ Wayne
41 The 1975 lead singer Matthew
42 Sputnik letters
45 Letters for green jobs
46 About
47 "For example ..."
49 Did nothing with (for a while)
51 Dances in 3/4-time
52 Actor who played Dr. Mark Green on "ER"
56 Blood type, briefly
57 Large and hairy man, in gay slang
58 ___ Allen (furniture company)
62 "Welcome to the Jungle" singer
63 Big name in luxury hotels
64 Not hurting for space
65 Bachelor's conclusion?
66 Sci-fi character whose last words are "There is ... another ... Sky ... Sky ... walker."
67 Pummeled, Biblically

Down

1 TV channel whose slogan is "More Colorful"
2 Anthem contraction
3 ___ Bo (fitness craze)
4 With left and right channels
5 Music genre founded in Detroit
6 No contests?
7 "Milk's Favorite Cookie"
8 Ebony
9 QB Smith
10 Back bones
11 Band with the 1990 #9 hit "Silent Lucidity"
12 Wall art
13 Parts of a belly dancer's costume
21 15:40 at Charles De Gaulle, e.g.
22 Beg and then some
23 Make a decision
24 Creator of the New Yorker's typeface ___ Irvin
25 Psychologist's tool
28 Auto document
29 Follow closely
30 Atlantis was found here, once
33 Figure in a 1917 revolution
36 Animal with a horn
37 Burn slightly and superficially
38 Familiarize
39 Bygone Buick sedan
40 "None for me!"
43 Puma or lion
44 Written afterthoughts
47 Honorary title for both Bill Gates and Rudolph Giuliani
48 Some NFL bets
50 "Golly"
51 Educator Montessori
53 Richard Wright's autobiography
54 Bands recording to get gigs
55 Airport-security tool
59 ___-ha
60 Tbsp.
61 12/31, initially, or what is blacked out in this puzzle

Last Week's Answer

L	A	Y	■	T	H	A	W	S	■	A	J	A	R	
O	D	E	■	L	I	L	A	C	■	P	O	S	E	
W	H	A	T	C	H	A	I	I	S	T	H	I	S	
K	E	R	R	■	A	N	T	■	T	E	N	S	E	
E	R	N	E	S	T	■	■	H	A	S	T	E	N	
Y	E	S	N	O	■	T	I	E	■	T	E	E	D	
■	■	■	D	I	V	E	S	I	N	■	S	I	S	
■	S	O	Y	L	E	N	T	N	I	G	H	T	■	
O	O	H	■	S	N	O	O	Z	E	R	■	■	■	
U	R	B	S	■	A	N	O	■	C	A	G	E	S	
T	R	O	W	E	L	■	■	D	E	V	O	U	T	
T	O	T	E	S	■	S	K	I	■	E	U	R	O	
A	W	H	E	E	I	N	A	M	A	N	G	E	R	
K	E	E	P	■	D	U	L	L	S	■	E	K	E	
E	R	R	S	■	O	B	E	Y	S	■	D	A	D	

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